

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2022

TOGETHER IN MISSION



Census & Sensibility

What the the Australian Bureau of Statistics tells us about evangelism

I know most of you don't love statistics as much as I do, probably 98.841% of you with a margin of error of ... WAIT! Don't switch off. The recent Australian Census data is important. Let me try to translate the number columns into a meaningful story.

Some results were not that surprising. Turns out we're all five years older than we were at the last census five years ago. Over that time the Australian population grew 8.6% (1.5% per year) to 25.4 million. Half of that growth came from migration. Ask your parents where the other half came from. Speaking of which, did you know nearly 50% of us have a parent born overseas? Oh, and that Millennials

have totes taken over as largest age demographic? LOL. Eye-roll emoji.

But it was the Religious Affiliation data that surprised many. The proportion of Aussies who claim to be Christian dropped sharply, from 52% to 44% (in 2011 it was 61%). At the same time, those who ticked 'No Religion' rose from 30% to 39%. This represents two million nominal Christians no longer claiming to be what they don't practice. Most of us would see this as a rise in honesty – don't claim to be a musician if you don't play an instrument. But if it's a shift from 'I'm a lazy musician who hardly ever practices' to 'I'm no

In this edition

AUGUST IS BAPTIST CARE SA
MONTH

FINDING COMMUNITY AT
TRINITY BAPTIST


Baptist Churches
of South Australia

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musician and selling my trumpet', it is a loss and a grief.

The drop-off from those claiming Christianity was not spread evenly across denominations. Anglicans especially, but Catholics, Uniting, Presbyterians, Lutherans and Salvos had very significant reductions. Pentecostals and Churches of Christ fell a little. Baptists actually grew - by 2,192 - small falls in most states were more than offset by a jump of 4,500 in Victoria. Go BUV!

The generation that is least 'Christian' (31%) and most 'No Religion' (47%) are those millennials, now aged 26-40. But this may be more about life-stage than generation; young adults often do a prodigal walkabout before returning to faith. Let's be sure to welcome them as per.

So what's the story? What might God be saying to us and what might we do with all this?

Firstly, let's not get ahead of ourselves. Phrases like 'post-Christian' are easily thrown around, but I think we should be careful with them, recognizing that it can be a way of writing off the people around us - and at worst, resigning our missionary responsibilities. The "No Religion is winning, Christianity is losing" line is deafening, but pretty bad maths when our score is 44 and they're on 39. What everyone is doing is projecting the trends forward, and critically, assuming things will just keep going as they are.

This is so dangerous, because we Christians

have agency and responsibility. We're not mere victims of vast cultural forces that are eating us up. The truth is that Christ's kingdom is everlasting, it's on the right side of history and will rightly prevail. No empire, force, ideology or culture will swallow it up or outlast it. Remember Nebuchadnezzar's statue dream? There is no better, cleverer road than the way of Jesus, they all end up being detours.

Don't we know this? In the year 1800, on Easter Sunday at St Paul's cathedral in London, the number who took communion was six. Christianity was on the way out; Science was the bright new

"There remains an enormous thirst for love, meaning, belonging, hope and purpose."

star. But looking back, we now think of the 1800s as a century of enormous Christian growth. In Germany in 1930 it seemed clear that the way forward was science, technology, and humanism. Christians were backwards sentimentalists lost in a past age. Forward together! Now we look back on Hitler's twelve year 'Thousand-year-Reich' with abject horror. Things change. The direction our society is going in is not obvious, linear, inevitable, or beyond our influence as God works in history through us.

Having said that, we should take from this the reminder that we will continue to

see the same results if we continue to do the same things. If we keep on refusing to sow, we will keep on failing to reap. If we keep circling the wagons, pulling up the drawbridge and turning our churches into uninviting, introspective circles, what do we expect? It astonishes me that census news like this can prompt many Christians into further reclusion rather than spurring us on to better mission.

And we can readily do so much better. We're busily doing just about everything but sharing Jesus with others. We're failing at the most obvious and easiest of steps - looking at Mt Kosciuszko and writing it off as an impossible Everest. Frankly, we should grab the horns, see reaching Australians as our first, not last priority, and put ten times the resources into Crossover. Doing that would cost hardly anything, given that we currently invest ... wait for it ... less than 50 cents per Baptist per year. Come on! We can turn things around; we can change our priorities. Why wait till next census? Why not now?

Consider the opportunity dangling right in front of us! Let's zoom in on those 10 million (39%) who ticked 'No Religion'. Only 0.1% (1 in every 258 of them) categorised themselves as Atheist. Similar tiny fractions were New Age-ish or owned themselves as Agnostic. And the other 38.5% out of 39% seemed to not even know that they didn't know. We make an extremely clumsy error to imagine all 10 million as committed atheists when in fact hardly any are. The vast group of them are more likely wandering prodigals, not committed philosophically to the piggery but getting nudged and corralled there by the roughness of life cut off from Life.

So the 3.4 million practising Christians could perhaps consider their Australian mission field in 3 broad groups:

- 8 million Church Drop-outs - describing themselves as Christian in belief, but not intentionally connecting with other believers.

- 9 million Wanderers - as discussed above, not actively owning a defined world view but defaulting to a humanist/materialist life practice.

- 5 million Committed to Something Else

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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–practicing other religions or committed atheists. Rather than wandering, they’re deliberately walking a different road. But hardly out of God’s reach – Saul of Tarsus was one of these, many of us were.

So friends, there remains an enormous openness, interest in and respect for Christianity, and its message when respectfully conveyed. There remains

an enormous thirst for love, meaning, belonging, hope and purpose. What God has given us to offer is hugely attractive and deeply transformative. No Australians are far from God’s kingdom if you, dear ambassadors, are nearby. The sensible census takeaway is clear, I hope, I beg:

Not to sook, but to seek.



Rev Andrew Turner
Director
Crossover Australia



crossover
Helping Australian Baptists Share Jesus



Finding community at Trinity Baptist

Loneliness and social isolation can be harmful to both physical and mental health. They are considered as significant health issues due to the negative impact that they have on people’s lives. The lock downs and measures to limit the spread of Covid has exacerbated the pre-existing risks to for social isolation and loneliness, such as living alone. The recent cold winter weather has also increased individuals’ reluctance to go out and socialise.

Awareness of loneliness, social isolation has increased recently with increased numbers of people experiencing loneliness than in previous years.

A sense of well-being is quite complex and incorporates the whole person. This is where socialisation, a balanced diet, keeping a sense of humour, community connection, feeling of achievement and belonging all play an important part.

Care & Share at Trinity is a social activity program for people 65yrs and over who are living in the South/East Metropolitan area. The aim of Care & Share at Trinity is to enhance the general health and wellbeing of all participants and be a place to meet and make new friends. We are a community of people who come together to share life, a laugh and of course a lovely 2

course meal at lunch time. Everyone is welcomed and have the opportunity to join in the conversation and fun activities while enjoying a relaxed informal club style atmosphere. Activity can actually be fun in a group setting playing indoor bowls, games, combined with light chair-based exercises and stretches. Some of the other activities include: board games, bocce, conversation groups, memory games & quizzes, light exercises, cards, bingo, craft and the occasional guest speaker.

The program takes place on Monday’s, Wednesday’s, Thursday’s & Friday’s, 9.30am - 2.30pm and is located at Colonel Light Gardens.

Care & Share at Trinity is auspiced by Trinity Baptist Church and funded by the Dept of Health as a Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP). We also provide information and advice for those looking for additional supports at home. You never know, Care & Share at Trinity may be the supportive social prescription that you or someone you care for needs.

Please contact the Program Manager Janine Callegari on 8276 1144 for further details and arrange a free trial day. We are looking forward to hearing from you.



Seeking a just world

Baptist Care SA Month - August 2022

For over 100 years Baptist Care SA has been serving the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in South Australia. This legacy was born out of the mission, ministry and faithful service of South Australian Baptist churches. These Baptist churches believed wholeheartedly that God is a God of Justice.

Today in 2022 we serve the same God, a God who created every human being to live a life of dignity, equal opportunity and flourishing. We are still seeking to be co-creators of the Just World that was God's creative intention.

This August, Baptist Care SA and Baptist Churches of SA are prayerfully 'Seeking a Just World Together'.

We invite you to:

- Show our prayer video in your Sunday Service
- Follow our weekly prayer points on Facebook
- Join us in person for a prayer walk through our CBD on Saturday, 20 August
- Invite a member of our Church Pathways Team to share the ministry of Baptist Care SA in your service or preach on God's heart for justice.

For more details, please email Ellen Beasy from our Church Pathways Team at ebeasy@baptistcaresa.org.au.

Embracing reconciliation

Ninna marni. I am writing this from the land of the Kurna people who I acknowledge and thank as the traditional owners of this land.

Baptist Care SA recently celebrated NAIDOC Week – an annual week-long event that celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This year's theme urged us to 'Get Up! Stand Up! Show Up!' and commit to narrowing the gap between good intent and outcomes in order to achieve actual, systemic change.

The relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians needs to be based on justice, equity, and the proper recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights.

As an organisation, Baptist Care SA

continues to be committed to fully embracing Aboriginal culture in our walk towards a reconciled Australia. We work with Aboriginal Elders and Leaders to embed Culture in what we do and strive to Close the Gap through healing and truth telling.

As an individual, I remain committed to speaking the truth, learning the facts, and advocating for real and lasting change. I know that before I can speak, I must first listen— to be quick to listen and slow to speak. To hear from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people so I can learn and more deeply understand their stories.

In the spirit of NAIDOC Week, some of our Aboriginal and staff members graciously shared their powerful and moving stories with us. They shared how their connection to Culture

sustains them to deliver person-centric services that empower communities and deliver strengths-based positive change.

With a heart for reconciliation, I invite you to join me in listening to them. You can find them on the Baptist Care SA Facebook and YouTube pages. Together, let's pray together for reconciliation.

Ngaityalya,
Shane Austin



Shane Austin
CEO
Baptist Care SA

Prayer changes things

Praying together is a privilege and a joy. Generations of Baptist believers have faithfully prayed as we have sought God's movement, provision and leading throughout our history.

Join with us in praying to our loving God on behalf of the most at-risk people within our community at our Prayer Walk on 20 August 2022.

Beginning at Baptist Care SA's WestCare Centre, we will walk in small groups to various prayer stations across the Western side of our CBD.

Each station will provide an opportunity to give thanks for the

strengths of the vulnerable people in our community and to reflect on how we can pray for them in the unique challenges they face.

We look forward to sharing this opportunity to pray together in person during Baptist Care SA Month.

When: Saturday 20 August, 1.45pm

Where: Baptist Care SA WestCare Centre, 11-19 Millers Court, Adelaide

To register visit tinyurl.com/bcsaprayrwalk or scan the QR Code below.



How can we end hunger?

Want to find out how people are stopping world hunger? Baptist World Aid Australia's Christian Partner in Kenya shares five ways they are working with communities, so they can eat



Cooking dinner for your family or friends doesn't just happen. It takes planning, knowledge, resources—and a good dose of creativity.

It's the same with solving a complex problem like world hunger.

With up to 811 million people not having enough to eat*, we are in the middle of a global food crisis. According to Amina Mohammed, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, food insecurity is now at a record high.

'The war in Ukraine has combined with the climate crisis, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the unequal recovery to create a perfect storm of needs in developing countries,' she said. And it's having a devastating impact on people's lives, as parents can't afford to send their children to school and families fall further into poverty.

Thankfully, God has provided us with the creativity and resources we need to end hunger, and nourish those living in areas where food insecurity is rife.

Baptist World Aid's partner, Anglican Development Services Eastern (ADSE), is helping farmers in Kenya find innovative ways to feed their families and earn an income, even as the country faces its fourth season of drought. ADSE staff members Nzuki, Paul and Charles share five ways they are helping communities grow their own food, so they can eat.

1. Sustainable farming

One way that farmers can continue producing crops, even in times of drought, is through conservation agriculture: a farming system with minimal tillage, so the soil is left undisturbed over planted seeds.

Conservation agriculture conserves nitrogen and water in the soil, which

improves farming efficiency and encourages greater biodiversity on the land. This increases a farmer's yield while reducing reliance on fuel and fertiliser, which are expensive and hard to come by.

'Farmers who adopted these practices have harvested something they can sell,' Nzuki says. 'They are able to smile because they are getting something from their farms.'

2. Establishing water sources

Rising food prices means many people struggle to eat fresh vegetables, which leads to malnutrition and long-term health problems.

One solution is helping families start kitchen gardens and domestic farms by establishing water sources for easy irrigation. 'We are training farmers in small-scale irrigation to ensure increased access to vegetables to boost their nutritional status,' Paul said.

Having sources of water close by also means farmers don't have to spend time away searching for water, leaving more time for family and other economic activities.

3. Creating new livelihoods

Women in vulnerable regions are now diversifying their farming to boost their income, feed their families, and continue sending their children to school.

With ADSE's help, women are raising goats and start poultry farms, as both animals require smaller amounts of water and food.

According to Charles, they are also training farmers in honey production. 'A bee can travel distances to look for water, so you don't need a lot of rain,' he explained. 'Some of the disability and women's groups are picking it up. We are supporting them, so it can be a

source of income to the community.'

4. Innovative crops

When ADSE began adopting practices from the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute, which promotes innovative farming to help families grow enough food to eat and sell, they knew they could be more effective.

One solution they have helped farmers implement is drought resistant seeds. Certain types of green grams (mung beans) produce bigger yields in changing weather conditions.

'If you get rains for two weeks and you have adopted these varieties, you are still able to harvest,' Paul said. 'They only require a maximum of 200ml of rainfall; the average crop requires over 250ml.'

5. Savings and loans

Savings and Loans schemes can also help farmers who want to adopt new ways of farming, but don't have the resources.

ADSE helps families save some of what they earn, so they only need to borrow small amounts to set up new businesses, send their children to school and feed their families.

'Farmers have the will and zeal, but credit is a challenge to them,' Paul said. 'With Savings and Loans Schemes, farmers are now able to access loans . . . they buy goats and beehives, which enables them to support their livelihoods.'

*Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



Sophia Russell
Communications
Baptist World Aid



**Baptist
Mission
Australia**



Many hands

Many hands make light work goes the old saying.

I remember taking part in school busy bees when I was in primary school. A couple Saturdays a year parents would be invited to bring their shovels, gardening gloves and wheelbarrows along to the school. There would be a list of odd jobs, maintenance or even small building projects to be completed. The combined efforts of these caring parents and teachers helped keep our school clean and maintained. I loved these days because I got to come along play in the sandpit and have a BBQ lunch. Reflecting back on those day however, I can appreciate how beneficial and important it was to bring the school community together for a common purpose.

Many of our Intercultural Teams have identified specific needs within the communities they live in. Through God's grace and provision they work alongside their communities to develop projects that will help to meet those needs and serve the wider community. The teams are working together with their community striving toward a common purpose, that the Word and love of God would be shared through both word and deed. The projects already

up and running include a café, a centre to support children with disabilities and their families, oral bible translation, English teaching and rebuilding weather damaged schools.

Baptist Mission Australia offers our partners the opportunity to join with our teams and their communities to see these projects established, both benefitting and blessing the community. Your contributions make an enormous difference to a project's impact. Please pray that God would bless the projects for His glory.

If you would like to partner with our Teams and their communities to financially support a project please contact me (lcornish@baptistmissionaustralia.org) or access the project page of our website (<https://www.baptistmissionaustralia.org/Support/Projects>) to donate.



Lisa Cornish
State Director SA/NT
Baptist Mission Australia



Baptist History Group Meeting

To be held on Friday September 9th in Mead Hall, Flinders Street Baptist at 4.30pm.

The speaker will be Dr. Rosalind Gooden who will be speaking on her journey with the Australian Baptist Overseas Mission.

The title of the presentation is 'One thing leads to another'.

All are welcome to stay for a light tea and a donation for this would be appreciated.

Advanced notice of the next meeting which will be on Friday 25th November.

If you need more information please email Marie Lines on linesmb@internode.on.net or phone 0417004401



Miranda was ordained at Unley Park Baptist on the 26th June



Patrick Gillespe was inducted as the new pastor at Westcare Baptist on the 5th June 2022



Mick from Peake was baptised on April 15th

Disability Inclusion Network South Australia and Baptist Care SA present...

Live a full life with a disability

6 chats for people with disability, their carers, family and friends

Jo introduces the benefits of **creating a vision for your life**

Vicky discusses how the **'my life'** preplanning journal can help

Jorja shares **NDIS tips and tricks** to have a full life

Sue tells us how **faith and fun** fill her life

Heather explains how **belonging to an inclusive and welcoming group** enables a full life.

Judy chats about **positive caring** to promote a full life

REGISTER

via **Eventbrite**

<https://bit.ly/3yO0Vf0>

Accessible venue: Broadview Baptist Church, 1 Collingrove Avenue, Broadview SA

Date and Time: Wednesday 17 August 2022, 10am - 1pm. Morning tea provided.

Please contact us to discuss specific access and dietary requirements.

Rising COVID numbers? It's okay. We have a back up plan for an online event. We will let people know what's happening late on Monday 8 August 2022.



More information:
disabilityinclusionnetworksa@gmail.com
T: 8275 7100 or M: 0409 921 337



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Growing Together in Marriage



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- August 12-14t 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 gtimsa.org

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.