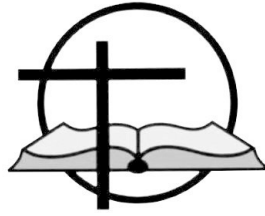


March 2022



Nungalinga Students from NT Baptist Communities Celebrate at a Graduation Ceremony. Story Pages 6&7

May Mission Month 2022 Crossing the Street

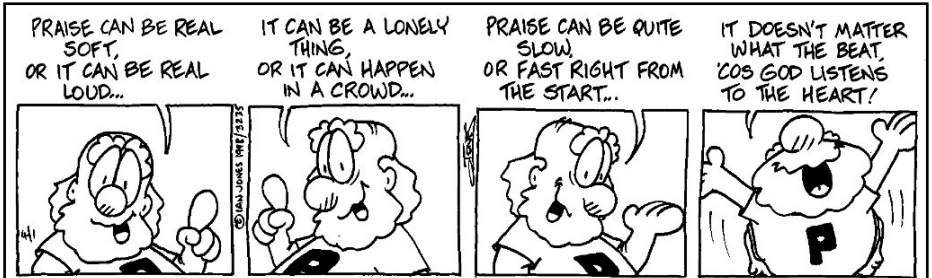
The theme for May Mission Month 2022 is 'Crossing the Street'. Through this four week series we will explore stories of Jesus from the Gospels, learn from His example and see how passionate people in Australia and around the world are living it out. **As followers of Jesus, we are called to cross the street, step out, build bridges and meet people where they are. We are called to live alongside our neighbours with the hope of Jesus.** That's what our intercultural teams around the world do! And it's what church communities in Australia are called to as well.

You and your church can get involved with May Mission Month over one, two or four weeks. Resources are being developed to engage all ages with mission. The full resource suite of videos, sermons, podcasts and written material will be available in March.

Visit www.baptistmissionaustralia.org/MayMissionMonth to explore all things May Mission Month!

Thank you for your partnership with Baptist Mission Australia's teams and ministry.

On the Front Cover: Graduates and continuing students at Nungalinga College. L to R: Perry, Jerry, Arana, Levina, Lorraine and Lottie Read more on pages 6&7



Used with permission

President's Message

If Palm Trees could talk...

I think almost everyone one, at some stage in their lives, feels like they are living under a dark cloud. I know I do. Simple tasks have become complicated. We must even think about extra

precautions just to go to the shops. 'Have I remembered my mask?' I say to myself as I get in the car! It is a strange new world, and it is not easy to navigate.

I was standing out on our balcony the other day looking out at the shrubs, palm trees and birds. The same ones that have been there long before we moved in, but this day was different. On this day they spoke! It was like they were crying out to me and saying, 'Mal, this world is an amazing place, open your eyes and look. This planet is teeming with life' (And that is certainly true for the Territory)!

Standing out on the balcony that day, the palm trees reminded me that planet Earth is such an incredible place. There is no other known planet like it.

This planet is wonderfully alive, and full of vibrant colour. Be it our deserts, or rain forests or coastal plains, wherever you look, it is alive and full of colour. (I think that it is only us humans that make things grey!)

The palm trees said to me, 'Mal, the dark cloud is only a cloud! The sun is still in its place, it hasn't gone anywhere, it's just that you cannot see it. And even on the darkest of nights the stars are still in their place, it's just that you

cannot see them. The dark cloud is just a cloud. Yes, it is very real, there are wars and rumours of wars and a very real virus that has made its presence felt. But this will one day pass and a new day will dawn!

This eye-opening experience took me to Psalm 19. Immerse yourself in this Psalm and I trust that in doing so, Yahweh will refresh your soul, as He has mine.
Amen and amen!

Mal Good
President

A New Name for A New Season

Global Interaction has become
Baptist Mission Australia



One of the nation's oldest mission organisations has changed its name as it looks to strengthen its partnership with Baptist churches across Australia and international partners around the globe.

Executive Director of Baptist Mission Australia, Scott Pilgrim, said the organisation had chosen a simple name, which clearly identified who it was and why it existed.

"We were birthed 140 years ago by faithful mission-minded people in Baptist churches and we continue to serve today as intercultural mission arm of the Australian Baptist movement,"

"We're proud of this long and wonderful partnership and so we're intentionally going back to our roots."

"We, like the more than 1000 Baptist churches across the nation, are a mission people. Our heartbeat is to come alongside people in their own community, culture and language, embodying the good news of Jesus by word and deed, in ways that make sense. Scott said the name change flowed from the implementation of the organisation's 2021-2025 Strategic Roadmap.

".....we have been intentionally and courageously asking big questions about our future directions in a rapidly changing world. As we've sought to listen to the Spirit, we saw that it was time to refresh our name and brand for a new and exciting season of ministry."

"We have a history of bold and innovative faith steps, and we see our new name as another one of these milestones. And yet we also humble ourselves, realising our need to learn, listen and seek the Spirit's leading as the face of mission changes around the globe."

"Partnership will be a vital part of our future as we're excited about the new season of ministry ahead."

For more information, please contact our Communications Manager Teagan Dwyer-Riviere - (03) 9819 4944

Welcome Lisa! Our new SA/NT Baptist Mission Australia State Leader

Baptist Mission Australia is excited to welcome Lisa Cornish as your new SA/NT State Leader. Lisa began in the role in February and is looking forward to connecting with the candidates and intercultural workers sent from SA/NT, as well as the faithful individual and church partners across the states.

Lisa brings a strong pastoral and missional heart to the role. She is an accredited pastor in South Australia and has recently been pastoring in the Barossa Valley. She had a nursing background before sensing God's call to pastoral ministry. Please join us in praying for Lisa and her family in this time of transition.

Lisa is excited to get to know you!

You can contact her to arrange a catch up or speaking engagement via info@baptistmissionaustralia.org or 0421 074 920.



BELONGING PEOPLE

This issue of Belonging People, as well as past issues, can be found on the BUNT website. www.ntbaptist.org.au/belonging-people/

Celebrating Graduations



Levina with one of her paintings

It's always a busy time at Nungalinya College and the end of 2021 was no exception with two Graduation Ceremonies, one in late October and another in early November. Four students from our remote Baptist churches graduated after completing their studies which had been taken in several modules over the year.

Graduation evenings at Nungalinya are a joy as students, staff, family and friends join the service in song, prayer and reflection on the Scriptures. This is followed by an evening of fellowship with worship dances, and songs shared with visitors around a buffet meal.

Arana Rice, a church leader at Ali Curung, graduated in October with **Certificate III in Christian Ministry** and it was a proud moment when she spoke with confidence about her faith walk and what she had learned at Nungalinya College. See next page for Arana's message.

The following week, three ladies from Yuendumu, **Lottie, Lorraine and Levina**, graduated from the **Art and Faith** course in another joyful celebration. In this course they were able to further develop their significant artistic skills and use them to depict stories of faith. A public exhibition of all the students' art works was held on the evening and for several weeks after and artworks were available for sale.



ARANA'S STORY

My name is Arana Nungala Rice and I come from Ali Curung. I have two languages, Kayetye from my father and Warlpiri from my mother. I am an elder and leader for Ali Curung Baptist Church.

Here at Nungalinya I learned from experience how to live God's way. It is good to meet other Christian brothers and sisters from different communities. Nungalinya has helped me a lot for my study and to make me understand and acknowledge more of God's goodness. In this way I can encourage others.

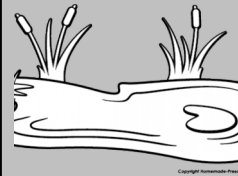
After I have finished Certificate 3, I would like to encourage other people in other communities. Like reach out and preach the gospel for them. Maybe I am thinking about coming to do Certificate 4.

Arana Rice

Please pray for the Nungalinya students as they continue to follow Jesus and serve him in their communities.



Lottie, Lorraine and Levina with BUNT president, Mal and Chris, at the Art Exhibition



Streams In the Central Desert

with Mat and Shannon Anderson

Baptist Mission Australia

Isaiah 43:19 "See I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the desert."

As with most of the Central Australian region, we have had a lot of rain so far this year. There's something uniquely magical about living in the desert when it rains. All of nature is waiting for it, poised to act as soon as moisture arrives. And when it does, BOOM, all around you life springs up!

We are praying that God will rain spiritually on hearts in the desert. We know many are waiting, poised and ready. We talk to them and hear their stories. There are many people waiting on God to touch them and we pray that He will act and sweep people up in the flood of His grace and goodness! We are praying that people will jump into the streams, to throw themselves fully into what God is doing here in the desert.

Upcoming events

We are really looking forward to a few events that are planned for this year. First, Easter celebrations which are hopefully going to be held at Lajamanu in April. This is always a time of learning and growing together. We are also excited for the whole Outback Team to be able to meet together for the first time. Danny and Beth Hunt, Vivian Grice and Mark Holt are all hoping to make their way north for this gathering. Please pray that they will be able to come and it will be a time of growth for our team and the churches who participate.



The Anderson Family

Health and Safety

Covid arrived here in January and has been making the rounds in Yuendumu. All of the families we know have been impacted by the virus and many have had the virus. We are so thankful that up to this point it has been mild. Many people have been sent to Alice Springs or Darwin, but most have been sent as a precaution and have returned after a short time of recovery.

We are currently in a "Biosecurity Zone" which limits movement in and out of Yuendumu. No one is supposed to leave unless they receive an exemption and no one is allowed to return without a negative RAT test. School has not returned as normal and may not for a while. Teachers are visiting each of the camps and supporting families to provide home learning for their kids. Our kids are already accustomed to home learning so it has been a relatively smooth start back to school for us and it has given us more time to work on music and Lego and other interest areas



Baptisms

One of the highlights of the last few monthsOur church gathered together for a baptism and a baby dedication. It was especially exciting for us as (our daughter) Beth was one of those baptised! Three other ladies, Leah, Lorraine and Ingrid, were also baptised. Several families brought their babies to be dedicated.

Our Yapa brothers and sisters did a wonderful job leading the busy service and it was a truly encouraging day for all.

Praise God for all He is doing on our team and for the growth He is bringing to our little group. We are so thankful to be a part of this work.

Pray with us:
See page 11



Darwin Baptist Thanks Pastor Warren

Darwin Baptist Church has said goodbye to its long-serving and much-appreciated associate pastor, Warren Douglas.

Warren arrived at DBC with his wife, Liz, and two of their four children in 2012. His role in those early days was to encourage discipleship through connect groups, to oversee the youth ministry, and to preach and teach. But with a strong desire to reach the lost, Warren's role soon broadened to include outreach and community engagement.

He worked with Melaleuca Refugee Centre to establish connections with asylum seekers, served and facilitated numerous training courses including Alpha and Freedom in Christ, and assisted in the establishment of several DBC ministries including Food for Life and Mainly Music.

Warren was also a large part of maintaining relationships between the church and community organisations such as Pearl Nursing Home and Parap Primary School.



Warren admits there have been some challenges – “I remember the first few years – I think I heard the term ‘maverick’ a few times!” – but says he is extremely thankful for the ways God has changed him over the past decade.

“I have grown as a pastor in lots of ways. [God] has tamed my independent spirit and helped me learn to work more as a team.

“...I will always remember DBC as a place where I formed real friendships. I have so many memories of ways we have served God together; camps, picnics, services, weddings. It has been very special.”

Mal Sercombe, senior pastor, agrees the journey has been memorable.

“Warren came as a package with Liz and it would be remiss if I didn’t also acknowledge the generous contribution Liz made to the life of our church family, by which we were enormously blessed,” he said.

“Thank you Warren for the input you’ve had, for the things you have done and for the legacy that you leave. Our intent is to pray God’s blessing for you for whatever the future looks like.”

Kate Woods



Warren was thanked by Darwin Baptist friends at a special event.

Continued from Page 9 *With Mat and Shannon Anderson*

Please Pray For Us:

- **For the NT communities as we face Covid**, for Healthcare workers and government legislators. Pray for God to use these times in our lives.
- **For the Walker Trial** taking place in Darwin. Pray for justice, peace and healing. For strength for those who are testifying and wisdom. .
- **For the ladies who were baptised.** For their growth and spiritual protection as they embrace newness in Christ and follow in Jesus' tracks.

Christmas Story and Painting Workshop with Anmatyerr Ladies at Ti Tree 2021

Ming Fang and David Strickland are translators with AUSIL/Wycliffe in Central Australia and members at Alice Springs Baptist Church.

This workshop was postponed 3 times in 2021, however when God intervened no one could stop us! When the restrictions were lifted, David and I went to visit Ti Tree and held a Christmas story workshop .

A big thankyou to April Campbell who helped to get the people together to do the paintings. Since we had the newly published Anmatyerr Mini Bible and other materials, we taught the ladies the Bible message in their own language.

David, I and the ladies sang hymns and prayed. We shared with them the Christmas stories then I prompted with ideas. They talked and discussed with each other. Once they had an idea, each drew their own picture on the paper with pencils and later put these onto canvas.

We set up the venue at the Ti Tree park and David brought the water with a bucket from nearby. The ladies started their favourite activity - painting! They enjoyed choosing the colours and style.



Doing dot paintings takes a long time, first of all, to cover the whole canvas with black paint. Secondly, leaving it to dry, so we took a lunch break and the grandchildren came. They were very excited and keen to join with us. I offered them colouring to do.



Next day Selina (above) joined us. She enjoyed painting very much and decided to ring her husband who had been badly injured in a car accident and was doing rehab in Adelaide. She was very proud to share with him her Christmas painting and even showed her painting to him through video which really cheered him up a lot. They both really appreciated this event, and agreed it was a blessing for them, which deeply touched me.

Photos: Page 12 Top to bottom
 Eileen Campbell's careful dot painting
 Cindy Presley and her daughter
 Denita with her colouring page
This page
 L. Selina Top R: Eileen and granddaughter Denita



Painting is a very natural way for the Aboriginal people to pass on their knowledge. Some of the ladies were a little shy but after they completed their paintings and we asked them to do a "Show and Tell", they felt confident to share the Christmas story with their family! So God's Word was easily passed to their families and friends.

Ming Fang Strickland



The ladies happily give a "Show and Tell" of their completed artworks.

Cornerstone Christian Church in their Community

We are looking forward to a good year together' says **Pastor Neil Wright.**

Food for Life has been booming and is regularly increasing in the number of people accessing the service for food security. On the 1st March, Neil and Margaret Barker made pancakes for people to enjoy in remembrance of Shrove Tuesday. There is an amazing group of volunteers that helps out every week in this important ministry.



Making pancakes for Food for Life clients

Café and LifeHouse The Corner Café celebrated their first birthday in February. A massive thank you to Isaac and Vanessa Broad in establishing the first LifeHouse ministry and for their hard work over the year. It has been a great vehicle to connect with our community and we are working on establishing partnerships with Youth For Christ and Mission Australia to provide traineeships for young people in the community.



The Cornerstone Kids are doing a series called *'I Believe'*. The series touches on the basics of faith and looks at people in the Bible that modelled faith. The huddle groups talk about how they can apply what they have learned.

Pastor Neil Wright

The Youth Group, known as FeDS (Fellowship, Devotion and Service) have kicked off for the year and are currently doing a Youth Alpha course which will have a weekend study component in May. At this time we are hoping that a number of the youth come to faith so this is an important prayer moment for the church.

Baptist Mission Australia - Outback Team *Challenges and Opportunities*

As in all ministries at this time of continuing pandemic, there have been difficulties yet also opportunities. One of the bigger challenges facing the remote communities (Yuendumu, Lajamanu, Kalkarindji, Ali Curung, Willowra, as well as smaller outstations) in recent months has been outbreaks of locally transmitted cases of COVID 19. This poses a threat to vulnerable community members who often have other underlying health conditions.

However it has also provided an opportunity for Mat and Shannon to demonstrate in word and deed the message of the gospel to people in need. We are grateful to God that at this stage it looks as though the symptoms of those infected have been relatively mild.

The team has also been encouraged by new members, Danny and Beth Hunt, who have formally begun work in late 2021, based in Victoria, but with visits to the outback throughout the year to work alongside Mat and Shannon. We are very grateful to the Lord that Beth and Danny's support level has reached and even exceeded the 100% required for them to formally begin. Mark Holt from BMA will also join the team to focus particularly on some of the northern communities as his other responsibilities allow him to make time to visit.

We would ask for prayer as plans are made for the whole team to join with our Yapa sisters and brothers for Easter at Lajamanu. Our concern of course is that the pandemic restrictions will not prevent this.

Viv Grice
Outback Team Leader



PLEASE PRAY FOR LEADERS AND PASTORS IN OUR INDIGENOUS CHURCHES



Pray for **Lynette Tasman** and **Pastor Jerry Jangala** and all other leaders at Lajamanu and Kalkaringi churches. May the Light of Jesus shine into their lives bringing encouragement and hope as they go through difficult times.

Perry Johnson (Yuendumu) and **Jerry Rice (Ali Curung)** are continuing students at Nungalinya College. Pray for them in their studies and that they will stay strong for Jesus as they also serve him in their communities.





Danny and Beth Hunt have joined the Outback Team and are working alongside Mat and Shannon Anderson.

A Challenging Season for Katherine Baptist Church

Over the last few months, to meet as Church family at Katherine Baptist Church has proved to be most challenging with lockdowns and some members have been infected with Covid 19.

Another challenge is encouraging new people to town to come to KBC as some newcomers have indicated that because there is no pastor we are not a functioning church.

In facing these challenges, weekly services have been held where the local body encourages each other, uses their gifts and prays together for a pastor to minister here. **Please pray for Katherine Baptist Church.**

Cynthia Prime

Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

- 1 John 3:18 -



Standing with Ukraine: Baptists Offer Hope and Help across Eastern Europe



**BAPTIST
WORLD AID
AUSTRALIA**
Be love. End poverty.

‘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.

With Russia’s recent aggression toward Ukraine, a humanitarian crisis is escalating as people leave their homes in search of safety. As of 28 February, **more than 368,000 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’ⁱⁱ, 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.’



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 from such tragic conflict, 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.

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.

Donations can be made at <https://bwaa.co/standing-with-ukraine>

Jo Kadlecek
Communication Manager
Baptist World Aid

BAPTIST FINANCIAL SERVICES

People often misunderstand what Baptist Insurance Services actually do, so I thought it would be good to give a basic outline.

Insurance companies sell insurance, and BIS is not an Insurance Company. So BIS does not sell insurance. We manage an Insurance Scheme on behalf of the Baptist Union of Australia where we add up the insurance needed by all Baptist constituents around the country, and we buy one great big policy of insurance in each of the required categories that covers all the Baptist constituents in the country.

We can have as many as 10 different insurance policies all rolled into the one BIS membership.

As a part of keeping the price as low as possible, in most cases BIS agrees to manage claims for the various insurance companies. This means they do not need to employ staff to manage the Baptist family - reducing their costs, and the churches have a single person to contact no matter which class of insurance may be relevant to their question.

And because we buy insurance to cover more than five and a half billion dollars’ worth of property, we can negotiate some sweet discounts along the way that no individual church could achieve by itself. Each church only pays its proportional share of the total bill.

That doesn’t mean that the basic price of insurance won’t go up – we can’t control what is available in the market – but for us, it generally goes up by less than it does for people trying to do it alone.

Glen Thornley
Relationship Manager
– SA & NT

Mobile: 0412 055 832 |
Email: gkent@bfs.org.au



KIDZ BIZ CHRISTMAS AT CASUARINA



A beautiful Christmas Nativity play was presented by children in **Casuarina Baptist Church's** KidzBiz program during a December Sunday morning service.

To the song, 'Halleluah Christmas' the children appeared, in costume, some reading the Scripture verses about Jesus birth, others acting out their roles.

The Church family showed their appreciation for this very special presentation with loud applause.



Annette Kent, under whose careful guidance and co-ordination, Kidz Biz has operated for the last 6 years was warmly thanked by Pastor Mal, on behalf of the Church Family, and presented with a gift.



V.I.P. Visitors at Foodbank NT

The Board of Baptist Care NT, staff and volunteers of Foodbank NT were honoured by a visit from the Governor-General of Australia, David Hurley and Mrs Hurley. They took time out of their busy schedule, while visiting Darwin in February, to view the operation of Foodbank and meet staff and volunteers and thank them for their efforts and commitment.



The Baptist Care Board and Foodbank CEO, Peter Chandler, expressed thanks on behalf of Foodbank workers, for the visit and the opportunity to show their Excellencies the work that goes on at Foodbank in providing food security to thousands of NT residents.



Top and Middle: CEO Peter Chandler welcomes the Governor General and Mrs Hurley to the Berrimah Warehouse of Foodbank NT.

Bottom: BUNT President, Rev. Mal Good in conversation with the Governor-General,



Meeting the Needs of a Vulnerable Community



Baptist Care NT CEO, Peter Chandler has told of the unprecedented challenges facing Foodbank NT at the start of 2022.

CEO Peter Chandler, along with staff and volunteers, was looking forward to a return to some sort of normality following the Covid-19 setbacks of the past two years. But the challenges continued in early 2022 with heavy rainfalls in South Australia, cutting off the NT's major supply chain with the Stuart Highway and the rail link North severed near Tarcoola SA. The road was underwater and the trainline damaged in 17 places. When the Barkly Highway also went under water, Foodbank Alice Springs was empty.

The impact in the top End was felt almost immediately with major shops in Darwin running short on fresh supplies. The community shopped until supermarket shelves were near to empty and although the Foodbank Berrimah warehouse was well stocked there was a big increase on demand for food and no certainty as to when new supplies would be arrive.

The normal Foodbank rescue program, where the majority of fresh fruit, vegetables, milk and bread from local supermarkets is recovered, crashed as well.

Foodbank NT was then asked to assist other charities in Darwin and the Katherine region with over 8 tons of food dispatched to Katherine. They also worked with Larrakia Nation to support 5 local indigenous communities (500 homes) many of whom had gone into lockdown. This challenge was met by an amazing attitude and ability of Foodbank's staff and volunteers to respond. From consistently providing enough food to support 30, 00 meals each month the additional need in the community saw a dramatic increase to 50,000 meals.

Peter Chandler says 'the challenges keep advancing. And we will continue to deliver. Our staff and volunteers continue to do what has to be done and as CEO, I couldn't be prouder of their efforts. Our supply chains rely on everything working, and any change to that quickly exposes just how vulnerable we can be.'

APRIL BUNT ASSEMBLY

This will take place on Friday 8th April 2022 at 7:00pm
Venue: Cornerstone Christian Fellowship
in Howard Springs



This Assembly will set the budget for the 2022-2023 financial year, as well as vote on proposed Constitutional changes. Churches, please consider now, who your delegates will be.

**Please Note the main BUNT Assembly will be held later this year.
Details to be notified.**

Belonging People
Newsletter of the Baptist Union
of the NT
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