

DECEMBER 2020 - JANUARY 2021

# TOGETHER IN MISSION

*A weary world rejoices*



*In this edition*

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FASHION REPORT

  
**Baptist Churches**  
of South Australia

# An ode to presidents past

Writing this article is my first act in my new role as President of the Baptist Churches of South Australia. Stepping into this role I am aware of the shoulders of those I stand who have gone before me.

I have watched Karen lead with such integrity especially over the past year where both Covid and the huge task of searching for a replacement for Mike Mills in the role of Director of Ministries has taken so much of her time.

There have been approximately 150 presidents of the association, the exact number dependant on whether you count those who have held the position more than once.

Interestingly, the first president was the Rev H.L. Tuck whose Great Grandson (Bruce Tuck) is the treasurer at Christies Beach Baptist Church where I am in leadership. Rev Tuck was in bible college in London UK with the son of David McLaren (one of the early pioneers in South Australia) at

the same time that Spurgeon was at the height of his ministry there. Another fellow student, Rev. James Martin, went on to become a revered leader of Collins St Baptist in Melbourne. Rev Tuck was also a friend of Silas Mead, founder of Flinders St Baptist at whose house he eventually died at the age of 59.

Reading the history of some of the founders of Baptist churches and mission here in South Australia, it would be hard to ignore the great personal cost there was to their ministry. Many lost wives and loved ones, could not afford life insurance (as in the case of Rev Tuck) and literally gave their lives to establish the vision God had given them for this wonderful land we call home.

I am not sure what lies ahead for me in this role over the next two years but being an immigrant from the UK myself who also feels called to further God's kingdom here in South Australia, I feel spurred on and



encouraged by my predecessors.

The challenges our association faces over the next season are different to those faced by Rev Tuck but if they are faced with the same convictions, bravery, resilience and reliance on God as our founders then we should have confidence that we can continue to build something future generations will be grateful for.



**Daniel Gardiner-**  
President

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## **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.





### Comings & goings

We are grateful to God for the faithful service of Mike Mills and Karen Walker as they leave their roles as State Executive Minister and President respectively

# What happened at the Spring Assembly

Assembly gathered for its first face-to-face meeting in 2020 on Saturday 14th November - Praise God we just snuck it in before the COVID-19 restrictions of the following week! It was a tremendous morning with over 130 delegates and pastors gathering at Gateway Baptist Church.

Our full agenda was started by worship and singing led by a team from Gateway and a challenging message from Andrew Turner (Church Development Facilitator) about the role of gates in our lives, reminding us that heavens gates are always open, that everyone is always welcome, everyone is invited and everyone is loved and wanted.

During the business of the meeting the following exciting announcements were recognised:

- We celebrated with Nathan Randall, lead pastor at Enfield Baptist and Mang Hlei Cung, a pastor at Adelaide Chin Christian Community as they were both accepted as accredited pastors with BCSA

- We welcomed into membership the Adelaide Lai Church
- We overwhelmingly endorsed Rev Dr Melinda Cousins to be our Director of Ministries for the next 4 years, starting in Feb when Mike Mills ends his term as State Executive Minister (note the name change from SEM to DOM)
- We thanked and blessed Mike for his 12 years in the role of SEM, acknowledging his strong, open hearted leadership and faithful service to us all
- and we gave thanks to God for His provision during this difficult year when a budgeted deficit ended in surplus.

After a delicious morning tea supplied by the wonderful volunteers from Gateway, we regathered for the Baptist Care SA AGM and heard wonderful stories and updates from Joshua Koutsoukos (Youth Pastor at Gateway), David Turnbull (State Director of Global Interaction), Graham Brown

(CEO of Baptist Care SA) and Steve Woods (Church Relationship Manager at Baptist World Aid) that encouraged and heartened us that God is a big God, blessing us in so many ways and always working in ways we cannot imagine. Delegates gathered in small groups to pray and thank God for these blessings.

But it was not done yet ... there was one more exciting item on the agenda. Mike thanked and acknowledged Karen's leadership and contribution as President before we celebrated the induction of, and welcomed our new President, Rev Daniel Gardiner.

What a morning ... thanks to God for the amazing ways He provides for and blesses us and to Gateway Baptist and the team of volunteers who hosted us so well.



We welcomed Melinda Cousins as our new Director of Ministries and Daniel Gardiner as the incoming President



## WHAT COVID-19 MEANS FOR THE FASHION INDUSTRY AND ITS MOST VULNERABLE WORKERS

The early months of 2020 saw 50 million garment workers lose wages, as the economic impacts of COVID-19 caused Australian retail foot traffic to fall by 71%. Clothing sales plummeted and fashion companies were forced to furlough staff and temporarily shut stores.

By May, over 30% of Bangladeshi garment workers reported that their children had gone without food because of the crisis.

This pandemic has the potential to reverse a decade's worth of progress made toward improving conditions for vulnerable garment workers, prompting Baptist World Aid to shift the approach to their annual Ethical Fashion Report to motivate fashion companies to stand with workers in their global supply chain during the pandemic.

"We knew we needed to adjust our criteria with the guide because COVID has affected so much," says Peter Keegan, Director of Advocacy at Baptist World Aid.

Launching on October 28, the special pandemic issue of the Ethical Fashion

Report highlights the extent to which more than 400 well-known brands worked to address the immediate risks facing workers in global fashion supply chains throughout the pandemic.

"Embedding a vision and practice in the fashion world that treats all workers – regardless of where they work in the supply chain – with dignity and respect, is critical", says Mr Keegan.

The report found, though, that the crisis has acted as a catalyst for change, with many Australian fashion brands working to improve the gaps and weaknesses in existing ethical source practices. More than 70% of companies surveyed in 2020 could demonstrate that they had taken at least some deliberate positive action to support vulnerable garment workers.

Despite these positive results, the crisis has also exposed the areas still needing vast improvement in the fashion industry, with no companies assessed in the report being able to demonstrate an end-to-end supply chain response to the impact of the pandemic.

Worker voice systems, including grievance mechanisms and worker unions were found to be the largest industry wide weakness within the report, with only 15% of companies surveyed providing evidence of strong and effective grievance mechanisms throughout the pandemic.

As well as advocating for change within the fashion industry, the report is also designed to empower Australian Christians to make ethical purchasing decisions that reflect a heart for the vulnerable.

"It's important that Australian consumers know that the choices they make in a store or online have the power to pass on opportunity and economic dignity to global workers, and sustainability to our world," says Mr Keegan.

To order your copy of the COVID Fashion Report and make a difference for garment workers, head to: [baptistworldaid.org.au/ethical-fashion-guide](https://baptistworldaid.org.au/ethical-fashion-guide)



GIFT OF  
*Peace*

This Christmas let us focus on God's gift of peace to the world through Jesus, who emerges from Isaiah's messianic prophecy of a child being born (Isaiah 9:6). Shalom, the Hebrew word for peace, is more than harmony and the absence of conflict, it refers to well-being, completeness, and wholeness.

Catherine reports from Siem Reap, a city developed on tourism, that COVID is influencing the rhythms of living, working and being. There are the beginnings of conversations around life, strength, peace, and hope that would perhaps not be happening if not for this current season. Recently she sat on the floor talking with a Khmer couple, a Khmer language nurturer, and some of her teammates. One of the couples asked her and the nurturer if we were followers of Preah Yesu (Jesus). The wife shared memories of having heard about Preah Yesu as a child. More recently, a family member living away from Cambodia heard about Preah Yesu and had been sharing with the couple about how He is bringing a depth of peace and rest into their life that they have not experienced before. As they talked together, they asked if they could meet again to continue sharing. They have wondered about asking before but had found themselves too busy or too hurried in conversations to do so. Yet as they

walk this current season as a couple and as parents, their yearning continues to deepen, wanting to seek and find the way of peace and rest, and experience the way that is not the way of endless habit, a way for freedom.

Through our gift of intercultural workers to the least reached people groups, we pray that they will build on conversations like Catherine's and have opportunities to share the good news of God's gift of peace during the Christmas season.

Thank you for your faithfulness, generosity, partnership, and prayers in 2020, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

May you have a blessed Christmas.

The Global Interaction SA/NT office looks forward to partnering with BCSA churches and individuals in 2021.



**Dr David Turnbull**  
State Director  
Global Interaction SA/NT



## I don't want to be homeless anymore!

Did you know 19,600 South Australians (around 1% population) have been at risk of, or experienced homelessness this year? Tragically, poverty and adverse circumstances can sometimes take more from an individual than subsequent efforts and best intentions are able to provide.

The State Government recently released its Future Directions for Homelessness strategy that reveals the alarming reality that amongst these people:

- 60% are female, 40% are male and 5% are aged over 55
- 24% are Aboriginal, our first nation's people
- 34% have experienced Domestic and Family Violence
- 29% are experiencing Mental Illness
- 29% (5700) of these are vulnerable and innocent children.

Baptist Care SA is missionally committed to playing a key leadership role to address the many challenges. We work collaboratively with other quality organisations that share our commitment to transforming lives and strengthening communities.

Whilst poverty is not the cause of child abuse, it does increase a range of risk factors which make the adverse impact of social disadvantage more likely to have a detrimental effect upon the safety and wellbeing of children.

We are inspired by the servant heart of Jesus Christ and encouraged by the heritage of faithful people that secured property for Christian mission in Adelaide's CBD in 1848.

With one eye keenly fixed upon biblical justice and the other on social justice... and with both eyes focused upon people living on the streets and struggling to raise children under layers of adversity, Baptist Care SA has embarked upon major service planning and facility redevelopment processes. We expect this will lead to us re-focusing and re-positioning our Homelessness Support Services and upgrade WestCare's facilities for the next 50-100 years of service to the SA community.

I encourage you to pray faithfully with us and seek to serve others respectfully in whatever way you can. Could you join the growing community of contributors that share our desire to make a positive and enduring difference?



Graham Brown  
CEO

Baptist Care SA

May God bless you as you consider and respond to these challenges and opportunities.

## The Tumbelin Journey

The Tumbelin Alcohol & Other Drug (AOD) Outreach program is an adventure therapy intervention for 13-18 years olds who are struggling with drugs or alcohol. Tumbelin has been delivered by Baptist Care across SA for more than 10 years.

Throughout the program, young people are challenged to consider their AOD use and the impact it is having on their life, as well as identify personal goals where they would like to see change in

their own life.

In the past 12 months, we have

- engaged with 138 clients
- conducted 14 workshops, reaching 387 students
- run 32 'Summit Days' (adventure days spent outdoors hiking, climbing, riding and more)
- organised 23 expeditions.

## Emma's Story

Emma was young, angry and homeless.

She was barely attending school following a series of suspensions for fighting and was splitting her time between couch surfing and emergency housing. Bright, energetic and ambitious, she knew she wanted a job, independence and a home.

"But I didn't know how to get there," she explains, "(so) I just got more heavily into drugs."

But when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, she was in danger of losing housing completely.

Tumbelin staff worked with Emma to secure safe accommodation for her throughout the restrictions. They supported her to create the routine she craved and soon she was able to fulfil the requirements for independent housing.

"If I didn't have that routine, I wouldn't have got my house so fast. Lucy and Jodi really helped me focus and re-set. Tumbelin was always something to look forward to. I was challenged to do the things I needed to do, but didn't want to!"

Emma also flourished in the adventure component of the program; channelling her energy into more productive activities such as snorkelling, bush walking, fishing and camping.

Today, Emma has significantly reduced her cannabis use, and completed Certificate II in Kitchen Operations where she discovered a passion for cooking. She's pursuing a career in hospitality and has recently started a traineeship with a local business!

"I have inspiration now...I've learned to calm down and re-focus. I can see other people's perspectives better... I've discovered so many places around here I never knew existed. I loved the adventures... I feel a lot better. I have a good new friend who is supportive, a job, a house and even a kitten!"



# DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH

Our kids have a weird tradition whenever we drive through the tunnels on Adelaide's South-Eastern Freeway: They hold their breath until we're out the other side. Why? I don't have time (or importantly, a good answer) to get into that.

I have a feeling that the coming New Year's Eve is going to be celebrated with greater than usual gusto. 2020 has been a hated year and become a reviled number. Again and again we've seen on social media comments like "2020 strikes again." It's like we're collectively holding our breath until we get through these last few weeks.

I get that it is some sort of coping mechanism, but let's admit that it's unhelpful and childish, just when the world needs help and maturity. It is victim language, as though this year is just something that happened to us. Putting everything onto the arbitrary year-number is a powerful form of fatalism, and the problem with fatalism is that we resign from responsibility. When you think about it, holding one's breath is about the most passive thing one can do.

The other problem, of course, is that there's no

guarantee that the dawn of Friday January 1st is going to usher in peace and prosperity. It's putting our hopes in sheer luck – it is actual astrology.

When you think about yourself as an agent, and agent of God's kingdom, no less, you simply can't go down that path. We are responsible agents. It's true we can't fix everything, but it's also true that we can wake up each day and ask the Lord 'What can I do to help?'

Even in a pandemic; even in economic and political upheaval; even if China, or worse, New Zealand take us over, then there's plenty for us to do, and we can see 2021 as a year of worship and a year of mission. Instead of holding our breath, are there people we can encourage? Real hope we can share? Instead of counting the days, let's make every day count.



**Andrew Turner**  
Church Development Facilitator  
sacredagents.net

SACRED AGENTS

## Dr John Beasy sharing at History Group meeting

The next meeting of the SA Baptist History Group to be held on Friday 5th March 2021. This will be at Enfield Baptist Church, 1 Francis Avenue, Broadview 5083, at 4.30pm.

Dr. John Beasy will be the speaker and he will share with us about his journey in ministry. There will be a simple meal to finish with and a small donation would be appreciated.

A warm welcome to anyone who may be interested.

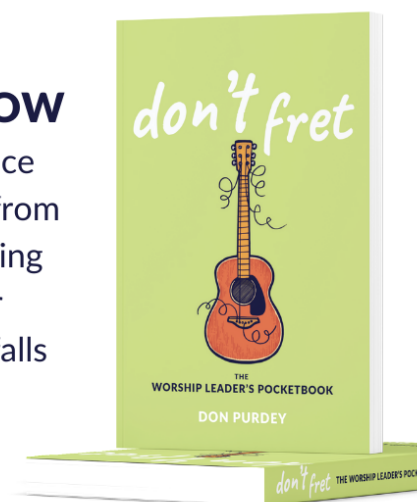
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