

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2022

TOGETHER IN MISSION

Houston,
we have a
problem...



These were the words spoken by Jim Lovell, commander of the Apollo 13 space mission after an explosion caused the loss of the entire oxygen supply for their space module. The three person crew had to squeeze into the two

person lunar module while NASA scientists began to urgently figure out how they could use the lunar module as a life boat to bring the crew home alive.

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As I have been speaking to pastors and leaders from our Baptist movement over the last few months I have been hearing many people share similar words to those spoken by Jim Lovell. For some there is an attendance problem, for some a volunteer problem, for some a financial problem. Others identify deeper problems; a mission problem, a discipleship problem, a consumer Christianity culture problem, a vision and direction problem, a problem maintaining deep community at a time people attend Church less regularly.

The question is what do we do with these problems? It can be easy to try and deny them, or just accept them as part of the season, or point to the positives that give reason for encouragement, or just carry on and hope for the best.

I believe the best thing we can do with our problems is to face them head on. If the Apollo 13 crew had been in denial, the consequences would have been fatal. Just like in the movie, a Church naming a problem is the crucial step, the catalytical moment that begins the process of change.

We can learn much from the NASA scientists working to solve the crisis they faced. There were no easy answers. The search for a solution required collaboration, creativity, ingenuity, hard work and thinking outside the square. It required them to neither panic nor be complacent. It required them to listen well to one another, to learn together, to avoid the blame game and instead draw

on the gifts, skills, and insights each team member had to contribute.

Christian leaders should be able to face problems we experience with confidence and hope. God is with us in good times and bad, God is in control, and greater is

"I believe the best thing we can do with our problems is to face them head on"

he who is in me (and us) than he who is in the world. God's promises are that he will build his Church and move by the power of his spirit.

This is unquestionably a challenging and exciting moment in history for the Church. It's a time for prayer, honest conversation, humility, creativity and courage. But the most courageous step a Church needs to take may be the very first one, the one Jim Lovell did without hesitation. Houston we have a problem. May your Church be courageous in this time, for the cause of Christ and his gospel.



Mark Sanders
Church Development
Facilitator

In case you missed it

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Pastors Gathering was held at Adelaide Hills Convention Centre in August



Kim Smith spoke to youth leaders at Rostrevor Baptist in August



Our Recognised Pastors Intensive was held at the Baptist Centre in September

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Inspire Conference in 2022

There is a real sense of excitement for this year's Inspire SA conference. The perfect place to gain encouragement and discernment, Inspire SA aims to highlight local mission opportunities.

This year, we have invited Geoff Maddock to lead our conversations and inspire us as we serve Jesus in creative and courageous ways in our local area.

Geoff, a keen photographer, mission practitioner, and State Leader at Baptist Mission Australia (Vic/Tas), will be sharing on the topic 'The World is God's Arena for Action'. Geoff's extensive experience in both urban and global mission contexts will surely springboard our discussions.

Geoff is passionate about journeying with Australian churches and exploring the ways in which partnership with global mission can grow the effectiveness of mission within local communities.

Last year's attendees 'Loved putting my head in a different space, out of the weekly cycle, and thinking more broadly. It was great to meet other church leaders and hear what's happening in their world'.

With a new shake-up to the format, the conference will kick off at dinnertime on the Tuesday, and continue through Wednesday. Attendees can choose to attend full-time or part-time, or both.

We'll also hear from Elliot Keane and Mark Sanders who serve our movement of churches to inspire, encourage and coach church planting, revitalisation and new missional initiatives.

We're excited to share stories from across our movement, be encouraged together and have inspired conversations.

Reserve your spot now at sabaptist.asn.au/inspire22



Embracing reconciliation

One in six Australian children today are living in poverty. That equates to almost three quarters of a million Australian children who are currently living in situations where families can barely cover the cost of basics and provide or keep a secure roof over their head.

These children haven't slipped through the system, missing out on support they are entitled to. They are children of families who are already receiving the maximum amount of government financial support but are still struggling with debt and juggling the bills they can fall behind on.

At almost 18%, the percentage of children living in poverty is higher than that of any other age group, including those aged 65 years and over. Since the early 2000s, Australian child poverty rates have not only stayed stubbornly high, they have remained also on the increase. A 2021 report by Unicef and the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth confirmed that child poverty in Australia is on the rise. It also showed our level of child poverty was worse than other OECD countries. The report concluded that in Australia 'poverty remains stagnant and unacceptably high'.

Each day at Baptist Care SA's WestCare Centre, we're not only seeing an increase in the number of people coming to us to access basics such as food and housing, we're also seeing a change in the types of people needing our help. Amongst these is a rise in the number of parents, particularly single parents who are experiencing food insecurity, of which a recent report showed many parents go without eating a whole day at least once a week to make sure there is enough food for their family.

How did we let this happen? We are a country rich in resources and culture, with pockets of extreme wealth and theoretically, more than enough for everyone. Yet tonight, almost three quarter of a million Australian children will go to bed hungry.

As Christians, we know that the kingdom of heaven belongs to children such as these.

This October marks the twentieth anniversary of Anti-Poverty Week. This year, the call is for all Australian parliamentarians to commit to halving child poverty by 2030 and to set measurable goals and actions to achieve this. This would mean Australia could meet its international



commitments to the United Nations Conventions on the Rights for the Child and the United Nations Global Goals.

I have added my voice to the call. I ask you to join me by visiting the Anti-Poverty Week website, downloading and signing a Poverty Pledge and posting a photo of you holding it to social media with the hashtag #EndChildPoverty.

To treat all of Australia's children fairly, we need to ensure every family has what they need. A legislated plan to halve child poverty by 2030 would be a huge step to achieving this.

Poverty exists. Poverty hurts us all. I encourage you in joining me to do something about it.

Visit antipovertyweek.org.au



Shane Austin
CEO
Baptist Care SA
SA Co Chair
Antipoverty Week
2022



That slippery Saviour

It's hard to hold on to Jesus. Powerful things can happen if you just touch his cloak in faith. But getting a decent grip on him is quite a challenge. Let me explain.

From his first followers right down to today, we've all had our inclination to keep Jesus for ourselves. I mean, we might need him one day, right? But he can be elusive. Joseph and Mary thought they had possession of their teenager – they didn't. The disciples more than once found that Jesus had slipped away and wasn't on tap. Mark hasn't finished his first chapter before Jesus is escaping the town of Capernaum, which was finding him quite useful. "Let us go somewhere else – to nearby villages" – there are others who need him too. All those who've tried to bottle (or throttle) Jesus have been in for a surprise. He's very hard to nail down.

This is why I'm so concerned about the privatisation of our churches. If our main thing is to huddle around Jesus with our backs to the neighbourhood, operating as a private worship club for people like us and people we like, then - ironically - a meeting so carefully focused on the presence of Jesus can find itself without him, and its worship empty. When we exclude others, we exclude him.

So we would do better all round to think of Jesus as

having us, rather than us having Jesus. Instead of talking about 'inviting Jesus into our lives' we should say that we are invited into his. If he is the host and not just guest of our gatherings, then we must invite all those he invites, welcome all whom he welcomes, include all he includes.

If the opposite of sharing Jesus is to keep him to ourselves, I'm not saying that's a bad thing to do - I'm saying it's an impossible thing to do. We're either sharing him or losing him. We're either missionaries or imposters, as Spurgeon put it. So let's open up our lives and open up our churches. In God's family, let's not be the kid who's grumpy at the prospect of new siblings – having to share a bedroom, share space at the table, share the attention of the Father. 'Those who try to save their lives will lose them, but those who lose them for my sake and for the gospel will find them.' So let's share, and share, and share, and find we have more of Jesus than we started with.



Rev Andrew Turner
Director
Crossover Australia



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Pakistan Floods:

When Pakistan's Sky Fell

Monsoon rains have long affected the northern region of Pakistan, but recent rains, combined with melting glaciers, have created catastrophic flooding



"Where do you drain the water? It's an ocean. It's a merciless sky."

**Sherry Rehman,
Pakistan Climate Minister**

Monsoon rains have long affected the northern region of Pakistan, but recent rains, combined with melting glaciers, have created catastrophic flooding that's killed over 1,400 since June, a third of whom are children, and affected 33 million people. The death toll rises daily.

Almost a third of the country has been underwater and more than three million children currently are in danger of waterborne diseases, malnutrition and drowning, needing urgent humanitarian assistance, according to UNICEF. Over 17,000 schools have been destroyed or damaged, jeopardizing children's education even more since COVID-setbacks. Farming villages have been destroyed, houses swept away and simple structures made of mud bricks crumbled as rains fell for weeks. Tent camps have been set up even while boat rescues continue.

'There is no question Pakistan's tragic floods will require a long-term response, a recovery that will take years,' said Laura Fontaine, International Programs Manager at Baptist World Aid. 'That's why we have begun the immediate work of partnering with other Christian organisations and their local partners who are currently doing food and shelter distribution.'

News reports cite that many children have been separated from family during the floods so efforts for family tracing has begun. Crops and livestock have been destroyed and infrastructure between many villages is now non-existent. Pakistani officials say more than two million acres of agricultural land has been flooded, preventing remaining farmers from planting new ones, and calling the floods the worst in the region's history.

The government has been distributing water pumps in recent weeks, but the equipment has been overwhelmed,

according to Sherry Rehman, Pakistan's climate minister.

'Where do you drain the water?' Rehman said. 'It's an ocean. It's a merciless sky.'

The flooding comes at a particularly difficult time for Pakistan when economic downturns, poverty and food shortages have troubled the country.

'The human toll is unimaginable in every way,' Fontaine said. 'Pakistan needs our prayers and our coordinated help to bring immediate relief and begin the difficult but crucial work of long-term recovery.'

PLEASE PRAY FOR PAKISTAN:

- that children would be safe, reunited with family, and have psycho-social support;
- that humanitarian aid would be delivered quickly and safely, despite flooded roads;
- that God's people would provide ongoing support, prayer and assistance for the Pakistani people in the years to come.



Jo Kadlec
Senior Editor
Baptist World Aid



**Baptist
Mission
Australia**



The Penny Black, the world's first postage stamp was issued in Britain in May, 1840 and featured Queen Victoria. This invention changed the way people sent and received their mail, it also created a new hobby- stamp collecting! The first stamps in Australia appeared before federation with New South Wales issuing the first of the "Sydney Views" stamps on January 1st, 1850, featuring scenes of Sydney and its harbour.

Stamp Collecting is one of the world's most prolific hobbies. The Wall Street Journal estimates that in 2013 60 million people enjoyed preserving the many, varied, interesting and beautiful postage stamps from around the world.

Baptist Mission Australia collects postage stamps too. Well, actually, a lot of our Baptist church members take the time to send us stamps they have collected over the years, removed from letters they have received

October is stamp collecting month!

or have been given from other people so that we can sell them to collectors and raise funds for mission work here in Australia and around the world. In the year to July 2021, \$70,000 was raised from the sale of both mint and used stamps. We praise God for His generosity and we thank those involved in supporting Baptist Mission Australia in this way.

If this sounds like an interesting way to support our Intercultural Team Members on the field then please, get in touch and we can chat about how you and your church can join the Baptist Mission Australia stamp collecting team.



Lisa Cornish
State Director SA/NT
Baptist Mission Australia



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Ava, Ty and Myra were baptised at Springpark Baptist on the 21st August

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SA Baptist History Group Meeting

The next history meeting will be on Friday November 25th at 4.30pm, in the Raws Room at Flinders Street Baptist Church.

The Speaker will be Colin Anderson.

The Topic will be, 'Mount Barker Baptist Church; serving Christ and the Community in the Adelaide Hills for one hundred

and fifty years'.

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

You are welcome to come along.

If you have any questions please get in touch with Marie Lines (Phone 0417004401) or email linesmb@internode.on.net



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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.