



RICHMOND BAPTIST  
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The bricks  
are gone but  
the church  
remains

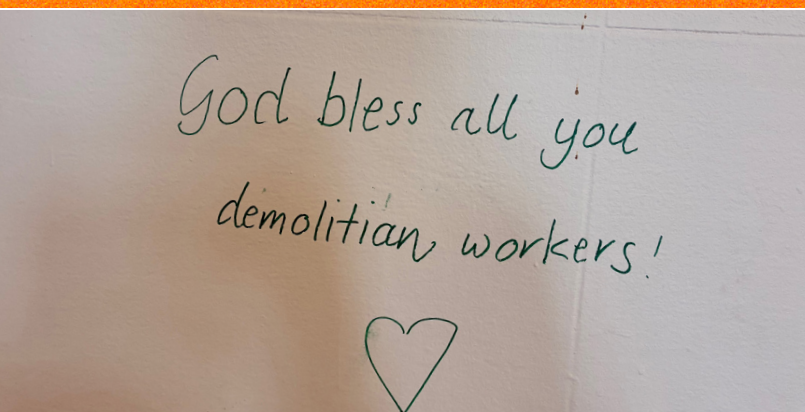
The power of storytelling  
with Mike Frost

How disasters affect  
children, and what we can do  
to help

# Together *in Mission*

Baptist Churches SA & NT





## The bricks are gone but the church remains

### Richmond Baptist Church heads into transition as they farewell their building

After more than 130 years of worship, witness, and community, Richmond Baptist Church has farewelled its home at 141 Richmond Road. The church building has been acquired by the government and will soon be demolished as part of the South Road Upgrade, marking the end of a significant chapter in the life of the church.

On Sunday 4th May, the Richmond Baptist church family met in the now-empty building for one last gathering. It was an opportunity to share stories, sing, pray and give thanks together. Church members

walked through the familiar space together, pausing to remember moments of joy, grief, growth, and transformation. The gathering concluded at the foot of the cross, a powerful reminder that King Jesus, who has been present through every season at Richmond Road, continues to lead the church family into what's next.

Melinda Cousins (Director of Ministries and member of Richmond Baptist Church) reflected, "In King Jesus, we can meet with God anywhere. But as embodied beings, we always meet with God somewhere. Today, we farewelled our building, grateful for all the stories and memories of God's faithfulness through

words by  
**Ruth Grace**  
Editor, *Together in Mission*

generations, trusting Jesus' presence is with us as His church wherever we meet, and hopeful about a new season as we step into a story only God could have written for our future."

The church family now enters a season of transition, meeting on Sunday afternoons at Seeds Uniting Church in Kurralta Park, while preparing for a new permanent home nearby in Marleston. Amid the sadness of saying goodbye, there is deep gratitude — for all that God has done, and all that he will continue to do.





## Young men baptised at Lajamanu

At the end of the old year, there was a new beginning for three young men baptised at Lajamanu. On Sunday 29th December, Joshua Jarruh (10 years) Denzil Tasman (15 years) and Dashwin White followed Jesus through the waters of Baptism.

Church leader, Lynette Tasman has described how the Church folk gathered by Hooker Creek to witness the baptisms of these three young men. There was great joy that day to see them witness to their love and obedience to Jesus as their Saviour. Following the baptisms, everyone shared in communion by the creek.

Please pray that Joshua, Denzil and Dashwin will grow in their love and knowledge of Wapirra and be a witness to other young people

in their community. May they be strengthened by the Holy Spirit to stand firm, resist temptations, and grow in their faith. Pray for the Church family at Lajamanu as they guide and teach them.

Later that day the community came together for a celebration dinner on Holy Ground. Lynette reports it was a special night with the young men helping with the cooking and the young women volunteering to serve the meal.

Loved and respected Church and Community Elder, Jerry Jangala Patrick, was present at the Baptism of the young men offering support and wisdom.

words by  
**Andrea Adams**  
Editor, *Belonging People*

## Together in Mission

Baptist Churches SA & NT

Sharing the latest news and stories across our movement of Baptist churches in the SA and NT.

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### In other news

*Congratulations to Zanya from Soul Food Christian Community on her recent baptism! Zanya has autism and her sensory needs make immersion in water difficult for her, so she opted to be baptised by anointing with oil. Zanya's Soul Food family was excited to celebrate with her as she declared her decision to follow Jesus.*







# The power of storytelling



words by **Tony Ling**  
Ministry Accreditation  
Facilitator

In a culture saturated with information, Mike Frost — renowned missiologist and author — reminds us that storytelling remains one of the most powerful tools for communication, especially in ministry. Speaking at a preaching intensive at West Beach, a collaboration between BCSANT and Morling College (NSW), Frost addressed a room of sixty preachers from as far as Mount Gambier and Orroroo. He emphasized that stories have a unique ability to impact the brain, forging what he calls “neural intimacy.” This neurological response creates an emotional resonance between speaker and listener, making stories not only memorable but deeply transformative.

Frost reminded those in the room that Jesus was the ultimate

storyteller, and that stories can do what mere explanation often cannot: clarify a message, anchor biblical truths in real-life experience, and inspire genuine action. For preachers, teachers, and communicators of the gospel, the ability to tell a compelling story is essential.

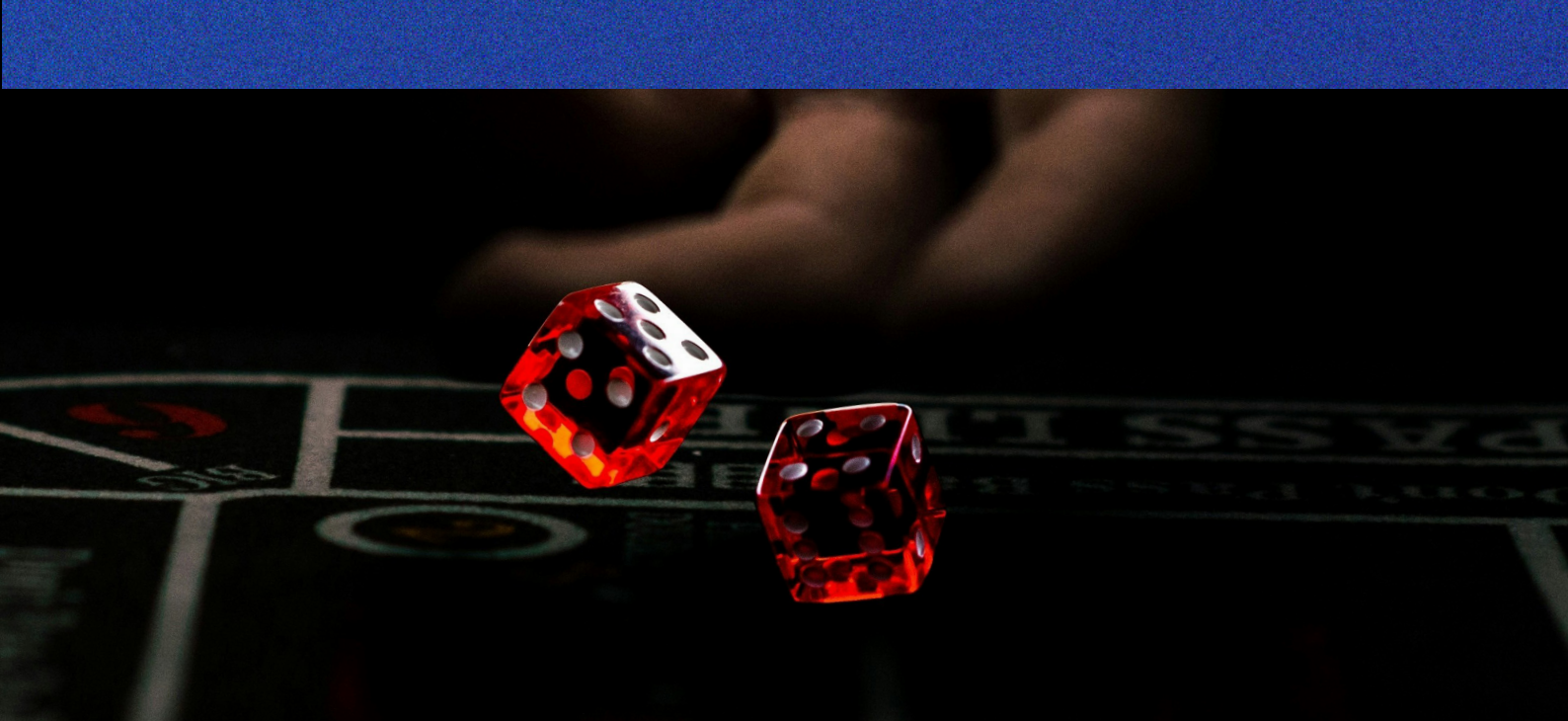
But effective storytelling doesn’t happen by accident. Frost offered practical advice for preparation. Begin by writing your story out, then edit ruthlessly — removing distractions and sharpening the narrative. Frost’s recommendation to practice aloud four or five times was a challenge for many.

While pastors tend to concentrate primarily on content, Frost urged a more intentional approach to delivery — highlighting the importance of posture, tone, and eye contact. “I was encouraged to

be more deliberate with my body language,” one pastor reflected, “and to preach with hope and compassion, not just deliver information.”

Frost also cautioned storytellers to use emotion wisely — enough to engage but not overwhelm. He encouraged the mix of preachers to avoid tired clichés, be deliberate with repetition or exaggeration, and always stay aware of their tone. Physical presence matters as well, with intentional posture, movement, and gestures that can help elevate a story, while careless delivery can weaken its impact.

In the end, Frost’s message was clear: storytelling isn’t just a technique — it’s a sacred tool that, when used well, brings gospel truth to life and invites transformation.



# What are the chances?



I'm not a gambler, but it does feel like I'm always calculating the odds. Is it going to rain this week? Will the Adelaide Crows win? What's the chance of a quiet evening without the phone ringing? We all peer into the future, Christians perhaps more than most. Which way is society going? To hell in a handbasket, or coming home to God?

Well, here's some good news. A report issued last month by McCrindle<sup>1</sup> showed that while nominal Christianity has dropped significantly over the last few censuses, some remarkable things have been happening regarding practicing Christianity:

- The percentage of Australians attending church at least monthly has steadily risen from 15% (in 2011) to 21% (in 2021).
- The percentage of Australians who are warm towards Christianity has risen from 58% in 2011 to 65% this year.
- No less than 784,000 Australians who ticked 'No Religion' in the 2016 census went on to tick 'Christian' in the 2021 census. Think about that!

- The percentage of Australians who are open to changing their religious views has risen from 8% in 2011 to 19% this year. (This looks like a shift from 'these things are set in cultural stone' back towards a genuine contest of ideas.)

McCrindle notes that across the 2010s it was older Australians driving the growth in Christianity. Other studies<sup>2</sup> are now showing a surge this decade by younger people. What a turning of the tide! Let me make 3 comments:

1. Praise the Lord! He is so good, why should we be surprised that more and more people turn to him?
2. Much gospel work is a matter of sowing and reaping. I'd like to pat on the back all the sacred agents who represented Jesus well when the wind was against them, when following Jesus was uncool. To all the church leaders who've worked so hard at child safety and other standards, and to a million anonymous Christians who've been quietly washing feet, serving the marginalised,

raising kids to know Jesus or praying for Grandkids. Others will reap what you've sowed, but you won't go unrewarded.

3. And when it comes to the Chances—what all this means for your local church or small group or ministry: For all this good news, the biggest factor determining growth is not societal trends, but the extent to which you invite, welcome and include. The likelihood of someone accepting an invitation to church may have risen from 30% to 40%, but 40% of zero is the same as 30% of zero.

Invite, invite! Make hay while the sun shines. And not just your 'interested' friends but everyone the Lord loves.

*1 'An Undercurrent of Faith' - McCrindle, 2025 - full report*

*2 See NCLS "Young People Most Frequent Attenders at Religious Services" here and the surge in Gen Z attendance in the UK*



words by **Andrew Turner**  
Director, Crossover Australia



# How do disasters affect children?

Disasters have the biggest impact on people who are vulnerable — including children. Here are three ways children are at greater risk in a disaster, and what you can do to help them build their resilience.

When an earthquake, landslide, famine or flooding strikes a community, few people are untouched.

But while adults may struggle in the aftermath, children are especially at risk of significant harm.

‘Children are particularly vulnerable because they often haven’t developed the life skills or physical capabilities to deal with what they’ve experienced,’ Disaster Management Specialist Kelsea Clingleffer explains.

‘It’s not just physical harm such as sickness, hunger and injury, but also psychological impacts and trauma that, when unaddressed, can lead to long-term struggles.’

‘But children and young people are also incredibly resilient and resourceful. Given the right support and tools, they can not only recover from a disaster but become a positive influence in their community.’

Here are three reasons why children are especially at risk during and after a crisis, and what you can do to help them build their resilience:

## **1. Children are more vulnerable physically.**

Child and adolescent bodies are still developing. Compared to

adults, they inhale more air and absorb more harmful substances when the air quality is poor. Their skin is thinner, so they don’t sweat or cool down as effectively when exposed to heat. They lose fluid more easily, so are more susceptible to dehydration or hypothermia when exposed to the elements in extremes.

When a disaster such a flood or earthquake destroys a community, people must often go without basic resources such as food, clean water and shelter.

For children, these are serious risks.

Being without shelter exposes children to extreme temperature and physical dangers. A lack of clean drinking water increases the risk of water-borne diseases, and no nutritious food leads to malnutrition.

According to UNICEF, children living amongst conflict in Gaza were the first to die of starvation, and were amongst those most impacted by exposure to extreme temperatures.

Our Partners help families meet their children’s physical needs, so they can continue to grow and develop after a disaster. They also teach children living in disaster-prone areas practical skills, so they can be proactive in protecting themselves and others if disaster strikes.

## **2. Trauma can harm children in the long run.**

Though highly resilient, children can be deeply affected by the psychological toll of disasters.



Immediately afterwards, they may experience intense distress, fear, and confusion. Over time, they can develop more serious mental health conditions.

Childhood and adolescence are critical times for brain development, and events can impact young people positively or negatively.

A 2020 United Nations report found children who had experienced or witnessed violence were much more likely to develop anxiety,



depression, suicidal thoughts, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance misuse, aggressive behaviour and impaired cognitive functioning.

The risk of long-term psychological harm is increased by the disruption of support systems during a disaster, separating children from structures such as immediate or extended family, church or school.

But when children are supported, they can thrive even in the most difficult circumstances.

Our Partners provide children with Child clubs, Youth Clubs, safe spaces to play and learn, and psychological support to help them process their experiences. By learning skills, children can increase their resilience and even go on to support others in need.

### 3. Children miss out on school.

It's often impossible to go to school when a disaster hits a community. According to UNICEF, at least 242 million students had their schooling disrupted by extreme climate events in 2024.

Catherine Russell, UNICEF Executive Director, said 'Last year, severe weather kept one in seven students out of class, threatening their health and safety, and impacting their long-term education'.

In countries that already experience conflict or poverty, prolonged school closures put children at risk of dropping out or entering into child labour. Girls are disproportionately impacted, and face an increased risk of violence or child marriage.

But the opposite is true: children who can continue their education are able to break the cycle of poverty and create a better future for themselves. That's why our Partners work with families in displaced communities, so children can continue learning even when they're living in temporary shelters.

### What can we do?

Though vulnerable, children can be resilient when given the right support. Disaster preparation, caring for children's health needs, and providing opportunities to learn is vital to ensure young people aren't left behind after a disaster.

By becoming a Child Sponsor, you can help ensure children have the best chance of survival.

Through your regular giving, you'll be helping our local Christian Partners provide disaster awareness training for children and youth, so they can be well prepared for a disaster.

You'll also be helping our Partners run clubs to care for the environment and mitigate the risk of disasters (for example, planting trees that help hold soil in place or prevent debris from hitting a home).

And you're helping ensure that children can continue their education in times of crisis, and receive counselling and mental health support to help them build resilience and heal from trauma.

Become a Child sponsor today and help children survive disasters. Learn more at [baptistworldaid.org.au/sponsorship](https://baptistworldaid.org.au/sponsorship)



words by **Sophia Russell**  
Baptist World Aid

### Advertisement

#### Looking for a cleaner, gardener or housekeeper?

Adelaide Mizo Christian Church has several members who are available for work in churches, homes, schools, or businesses across Adelaide. This is a great opportunity to get practical help while supporting local families building a new life after fleeing their home country of Myanmar.

Contact Joseph at [amcc.adelaide@gmail.com](mailto:amcc.adelaide@gmail.com) or on 0420 918 524.



# Thinking about mission?



*"It is not so much the case that God has a mission for his church in the world, as that God has a church for his mission in the world. Mission was not made for the church-the church was made for mission-God's mission."*

I love this quote from Christopher Wright. It reminds me that God asks us, his people to seek ways to engage in the privilege and responsibility of sharing the amazing news of the gospel with the community around us and around the world.

As we enter the second half of 2025, let me offer you two ways you might like to explore how God is calling you into His mission work.

*Exploring Mission* is an online course run over 10 sessions. It is for anyone wanting to understand and support global missions, for people considering becoming intercultural team members in the future, and for anyone who wants to better engage in intercultural ministry in their local neighbourhoods and suburbs.

Global Exposure trips have a long history with Baptist Mission Australia. These short (approx. two week), small group trips, (5-10 people), allow participants to be immersed in the unfamiliar, experiencing life on one of our ministry fields. These trips are not so much about doing as they are about observing and experiencing. Each trip is unique with the team on the ground working to make your time interesting and valuable, seeing how they invest and care for the communities God has placed them in.

If these opportunities sound like something your church, small group, young adult group or ministry team would like to be a part of follow this link to our website at [baptistmissionaustralia.org](http://baptistmissionaustralia.org) or get in touch with me for a chat at [lcornish@baptistmissionaustralia.org](mailto:lcornish@baptistmissionaustralia.org). Let's explore your opportunity to be part of God's mission to the world.



words by **Lisa Cornish**  
State Director SA/NT

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## Growing Together in Marriage

In 2025 we are inviting married couples, no matter what stage or age, to try to balance the busyness and prioritise their partner and marriage!

On the weekend, there is no group discussion or public sharing of your marriage! The Team couples share honestly and openly of their personal experiences and insights, sometimes out of pain and sometimes with humour, about different aspects of marriage. Following each session opportunity is given for couples to discuss their responses in the privacy of their room.

### Retreat weekends in 2025:

- June 27-29
- October 31 - November 2

This year all weekends will be held at Abbotsford Country House, Lyndoch.

For more information contact Steve & Val D'Arcy (0402 983 154) or Rob & Lee Allen (0438 892 980) or see [gtimsa.org](http://gtimsa.org) for details and registration.



**Morialta** Charitable Trust

Through an annual grants program, we support charitable organisations working to bring lasting change to young South Australians in need.

Your donation will contribute to achieving our vision for communities where all young South Australians reach their full potential.

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