



Summer
Edition
2025

Learning together on country

Pathway Community Centre
serving their community
faithfully

The need that arises just
when you need a break

What Christmas is like in
Malawi

Together *in Mission*

Baptist Churches SA & NT



Learning together at Bush Training Camp

The Outback team were delighted to join Indigenous Christians for Bush Training Camp again this June. The camp continues to provide a rich opportunity to grow and learn together as followers of Jesus. Experiencing God's presence on-country created a wonderful context for deep reflection and shared learning.

We enjoyed spotting wild camels and dingoes, and a nearby bushfire offered a breathtaking backdrop. Mal Good captured all the camp photos, which give a great glimpse into the beauty and richness of the camp.

Mat opened the first session, building on insights from previous



training camps and decades of important conversations led by Jerry Jangala and other local Christian leaders and thinkers. He introduced a framework to guide discussion on the relationship between faith and culture — how we think (theology) and live (transformation) for God within our cultural context, and how this connects to God's wider purposes for humanity (Rev 7:9).

This was followed by teaching from the Lajamanu "Channels of Hope" team, alongside Amanda Merrett, project manager for Channels of Hope for Gender in Lajamanu. The team has developed Bible-based programs and materials focused on gender violence prevention.

Leaders and members of Lajamanu Baptist Church have been instrumental in developing and implementing this program in their community. Engaging in courageous conversations, they are taking the lead in this vital area. Their presentation at the camp sparked helpful discussion and reflection among all participants.

words by
Mat Anderson
Outback Team Leader



For more stories from the Northern Territory, visit bcsant.org.au/belonging-people

Just when you need a break


crossover
Helping Australian Baptists Share Jesus

I know mathematically most years are exactly the same length, but this one has been loooong and I'm more than ready for a break. Baptist World Congress was meant to be the big event of the year, but I've also had a daughter in Year 12, parents moving into aged care, their house to organise for sale, the Crossover website under cyber attack – all while at church we've run four Alpha courses and preached our way through John. But some of you will read this and say 'That's nothing!'. We Aussie Baptists are pretty active.

We should rest more. Cathy and I have been much more disciplined about practicing a Sabbath each week and I can't recommend that highly enough. For many churches and ministry leaders, the only decent break we get is during The Great Australian Sabbatical – Dec 26 to Jan 26. It's much needed. Hear me say that we should rest more.

And yet, when?

In these times of Quiet Revival, a grass roots phenomenon across Australia where unchurched and de-churched people are turning up to church services in remarkable numbers – in these times, the New Year could be very significant.

Every single such newcomer I've spoken to has mentioned a season of 'building up the courage' before coming to church. They have the intention, and are waiting for a moment. I don't have a crystal ball, but I'm guessing that there may be a heap of Aussies turning over a new leaf in the new year and checking out church in January.

Will we be ready for them? Or will the Gone Fishing sign be up? (Mine would say, 'Gone to the Cricket'). Except I'm nagged by Proverbs 10:5: *A wise youth harvests in the summer, but one who sleeps during harvest is a disgrace.* I think of farming families who work their guts out when the time is ripe, to maximise the harvest.

So what to make of this? At Crossover, we're here to help, not to nag. So we've partnered with Olive Tree Media to help you hit the new year running without a whole lot of admin and preparation.

Encounter Easter is a series you can run for 10 weeks leading right up and into Easter (or a six-week version, or just the Easter bits). It's A-grade quality but easy to set up. The series looks at ten people who encountered Jesus across the gospels, alongside inspiring interviews with present-day people who have also encountered Jesus.

The ten videos are amazing for small groups or individuals to watch between Sundays, for which there's a preaching guide. Or small churches might want to show the episodes in their main gathering. And we're shouting the first 50 churches to sign up 50% off for as long as you want to subscribe to Olive Tree's Watch+ platform.

So be a very wise youth! Get some beauty sleep – but get into the harvest too to make hay while the sun shines.



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

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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Pathway Community Centre faithfully serves their community

Across the road from Clovie Baptist Church in Modbury North is one of Adelaide's busiest food relief hubs, Pathway Community Centre. On any given day, around 150 households come through its doors for a hamper of groceries. For these families, it is often the difference between going hungry and getting through another week.

The scale of the operation is remarkable. Pathway partners with SecondBite, OzHarvest, Aldi, Costco and Woolworths to collect and distribute food to households living in the north-eastern suburbs, from Tea Tree Gully and Campbelltown to Northfield and Gawler. Each fortnight, roughly 2000 households receive support. "We collect two pallets a day from SecondBite," says Pathway's director, Noelle Wallis. "We never know day to day what we will receive, so every day is a walk of faith."

The centre's food program, which has been running in some form for over 15 years, took off after the

2015 Sampson Flat bushfires, when Clovie Baptist became a relief hub. It was at this time that Pathway connected with OzHarvest and Second Bite, and the church's food relief ministry boomed. The centre has since evolved into a lifeline for thousands of people navigating the rising cost of living.

In just the first half of 2025, more than 600 new clients sought help from Pathway. "We're seeing more families with jobs, or even double incomes, that can no longer make ends meet," says Noelle. "By the time people come to our doors, some parents haven't been eating regularly so their children can eat."

With the increase in households seeking food relief, the team moved from weekly to fortnightly hampers and introduced a zone in order to maintain the sustainability of the service. Before, they would have people come from all over Adelaide, sometimes spending two or more hours on public transport, to seek assistance. The new zone ensures people are accessing

help in their own communities. "It is so much better for them to be engaging with support in their own area," says Noelle. "But as the numbers continue to rise, it is by faith that we continue to support our community," she adds.

Each hamper is built with love and care, and typically includes fresh fruit and vegetables, bread, pantry staples, and at least two portions of meat, when available. "It's rare, but there are days when there is no meat," Noelle says. "And then we pray and we see God's provision."

The recently opened Wellbeing Centre expands Pathway's focus beyond food relief. Built after years of planning and prayer, it hosts counselling, financial assistance, and community programs.

"Otherwise, food relief is just a band-aid," Noelle says. "We want to walk alongside people so they can move forward."

One of the centre's most practical supports is the No Interest Loan Scheme, which helps clients purchase essentials, like a fridge

A celebration of faithful service

After graduating from Bible College in 1990, Pastor Peter Leith served faithfully in churches across SA and the NT, including Yorketown/Minlaton, Port Lincoln, Norton Summit, Katherine, and for the past 12 years, Salem Baptist Church in Gumeracha. Throughout his ministry, Peter and his wife Caron have contributed enormously to church life — Peter through pastoral leadership, mentoring, and music, and Caron through worship, administration, outreach events, and community service.

We thank Peter and Caron for their many years of devoted service and pray God's blessing over their retirement.

Peter's final service will be held on Sunday, December 28 at 10am at Salem Baptist Church, followed by a luncheon.

To RSVP for lunch or for more details, please contact Lynne Lang at malelang@internode.on.net





or a laptop, without falling into crippling payday debt. “There’s so much pride in knowing, ‘I bought this myself,’” she says. “It restores dignity.”

The centre runs on about 160 active volunteers, many who have queued for food themselves. Every morning, the team gathers for a short meeting, sharing stories, updates and prayer requests. “Even volunteers who don’t have a faith will ask for prayer,” Noelle says. “They see the miracles that happen here.”

The heart of Pathway, Noelle explains, is simple: “We have received God’s love, so we treat others with love.” It’s an ethos that’s attracted volunteers, community partners and even sceptics. “One of our volunteers said, ‘I don’t have faith, but I can’t deny that’s a miracle,’ after watching donations arrive exactly when we needed them.”

Earlier this year, when Pathway’s ageing van finally gave out, they prayed for a solution. Within three months, without fundraising or

publicity, an extra \$78,000 in donations arrived. It was enough to buy a refrigerated truck. “And after that, the extra money stopped flowing in,” she says. “God knew what we needed.”

In a time when food insecurity is rising rapidly, Pathway’s practical support and compassion is changing lives. “We see people go from crisis to flourishing,” she says. “That’s what we’re here for.”



words by
Lucy C Budzynska
Glen Osmond Baptist



New Associate Pastor at Darwin Baptist

With a strong sense of God’s calling on her life to teaching and pastoral ministry, Vandana Thavare was recently commissioned on August 17th as an Associate Pastor at Darwin Baptist Church.

Vandana comes to us after successful professional experience and strong engagement in churches in Fiji, Alice Springs, Perth and outback WA.

In her desire to pursue full time ministry, she has been studying at Morling Bible College (Perth) over the past few years.

It has been a great delight to see her love of scripture, her passion for the Lord and her commitment to his church. Her warmth and wisdom have already been greatly appreciated.

This is an exciting time for us at DBC as we now have a full pastoral team, and we ask for your prayers for the team as they seek the Lord together.

words by
Amber Badenhop
Darwin Baptist



Christmas in our corner of Malawi



Many people in Malawi identify as Christian. Easter gets a lot of visibility, with churches holding gatherings and marches to remember Jesus' death and resurrection. Christmas is celebrated but to a lesser degree. Perhaps because, traditionally, birthdays aren't a big deal. Funerals are.

We also live and work among the Yawo people who identify predominantly as Muslim. The Yawo generally don't celebrate Christmas.

This helps us peel back our culturally-familiar layers of Christmas to the essentials. Take carols for instance. They don't get much airplay in our local town. Many Christmas carols don't make sense in the sweltering heat or the pouring tropical rain. Besides,

their very musical flavour sounds foreign.

However there are locally-relevant touch points. For instance, during local festivals like Eid-al-Fitr (at the end of Ramadan) those in the community who are rich give generously to others. This could be in the form of cows or goats as meat for celebrations, or money. The community around us know that we, as asungu (foreigners), do celebrate Christmas. And so we are watched. How will we show generosity during this festival that we celebrate?

Our team leaders for many years gave out Christmas buckets filled with clothing and basic items like flour and sugar which are highly prized. We give end-of-year bonuses to our culture and language nurturers that coincide

with Christmas. But this continues to be an area of growth for the two of us. How can we grow in our Christmas giving to reflect God's incredible generosity in giving Jesus?

Interestingly, our familiar Christmas trappings are creeping into our local town. The lead up to Christmas nowadays is enlivened by Boney M's Christmas album blaring on repeat from the speakers of a local store. And Christmas decorations are increasingly available in the local all-sorts shops as our town's population becomes more diverse and globally-connected.



words by
Susie & David Haydon
Serving in Malawi



Why we don't send toys and toothbrushes to communities in need

Packing boxes of items and sending them overseas is a wonderful act of generosity, but unfortunately, this doesn't always help families thrive. Baptist World Aid focuses on working with people to develop long-term solutions to poverty, rather than giving presents. Here's four reasons why.

Children love local toys

The toys children cherish most are created by people in their own community who know how they like to play, such as locally sourced balls, games and dolls. Children in our Partner's Child Clubs in Uganda learn how to make toys from clay, giving them skills and an item they'll enjoy. A win on many fronts!

We support the local economy

Small businesses are vital parts of the local economies that give

people a way to provide for their families. Sending items such as toothbrushes can take away business from local vendors. It's better to give people the opportunity to learn skills or start a business, so they can earn a livelihood and buy these items themselves.

We do things with people, not for them

Community development works best when organisations don't just provide items, but work with people to develop solutions to the problems they face. For parents this is especially powerful, as there's dignity in being able to provide for your own children. Families that develop their own solutions are more likely to be able to care for themselves when support is no longer available.

We help communities care for their environment

Donated plastic items are a problem in communities that don't have services or infrastructure to deal with rubbish. Instead, we support programs that help people keep their environment clean. Our Partners works with communities to clear rubbish, install pipes for water access, and build much-needed showers and toilets.

Want to give gifts that last to communities in need?

Better World Gifts are a wonderful way to help people fight poverty and injustice in their community. You can shop the entire range on the Baptist World Aid website.



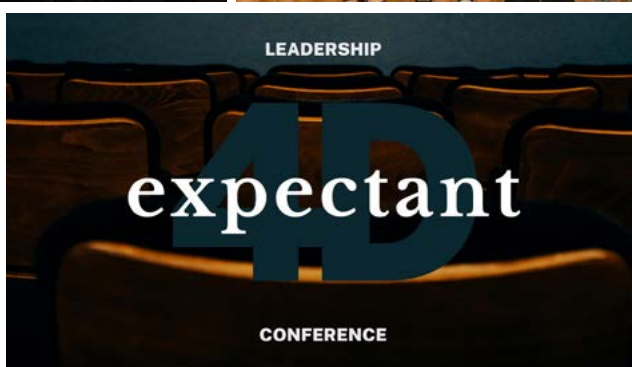
words by **Sophia Russell**
Baptist World Aid

Photos by Nick Lawrence

AMEN
AMEN AMEN



Key moments from 4D Conference and Assembly



For the first time ever, we included Assembly as a part of our annual 4D Leadership Conference.

Speakers John Robertson and Petrea Taylor shared on the differences between expectation and expectancy, including a powerful vision and message for our movement. You can watch their talks on our website at bcsant.org.au/replays.

During business, we welcomed the Matu Christian Church into membership and endorsed Neil Wright and Mike Harris

as accredited pastors. We acknowledged retiring pastors Roger Kleinig and Terry Williams, and thanked James Whalland and Daniel Gardiner for serving on our Board.

Updates were shared on the office renovations, the new BaptistCare, highlights from Baptist World Congress, and our first young adults multicultural worship night. Together, we prayed for the ongoing difficulties in Myanmar.

For more news from our Assembly, visit bcsant.org.au/news



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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