

issue 3 • December 2022

# TOGETHER

good news stories • quarterly magazine



Baptist Union  
of Victoria



# CELEBRATION ISSUE

Celebrating stories of God's faithfulness over the last year

# welcome

Christmas is a time for Celebration!

It is the season we celebrate and speak of the hope that Jesus brought with Him into the world.

In contrast, our world is full of fear – fear of war, fear about the cost of living, fear of not being loved, accepted and included. Fear, of course, inevitably leads to hopelessness – this sense that we have no future, and we are worthless.

Yet Christmas, the birth of Jesus, provides us with an alternate story. A story where fear is conquered, hope restored, and true freedom made possible. Jesus is born for a humanity searching for freedom and peace; He is born for everyone burdened by sin, in need of salvation, and longing for hope.

Finally, the Christmas message is one of celebration – of hope, welcome, inclusion and the

promise that we can be free from the burdens that weigh us down and destroy our soul.

No matter what messages the world may give about our skin colour, post code, education or mistakes, the message of Jesus is, 'I love you, I accept you and I want a relationship with you'.

The theme of this issue of TOGETHER is also one of Celebration! You will read many stories of what God is doing through our local churches, agencies and even our Support Hub as we join with Him in spreading the message of love, acceptance, freedom and hope.

We have a wonderfully diverse and inclusive Baptist family that has shown incredible resilience and adaptability over the last 3 years. At our recent Members' Dinner gathering we asked churches to identify the "wins" from the last year. It was so wonderful to hear the myriad

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of responses from our range of churches and communities of faith. We celebrate some of these stories in this issue along with other stories from around our Baptist family.

I wish you and your families a happy Christmas – may you really sense the nearness of Emmanuel, God with us, and celebrate the hope that Jesus brought us at this Christmas time.

Rev Daniel Bullock



Rev Daniel Bullock is the BUV Director of Mission and Ministries.



# CELEBRATING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Pastor Simon Schwartz from Phillip Island Baptist Church, at the Phillip Island Toy Run

# PHILLIP ISLAND TOY RUN

Phillip Island Baptist Church hosted their first annual Toy Run, a rider-and-community-organised event where all the collected toys will be donated to disadvantaged children and families in the Phillip Island, San Remo, Bass, Corinella, Coronet Bay, Grantville and Kilcunda regions.

Jason and Samatha Hampstead, who run a tattoo business on Phillip Island, heard about several families doing it tough this year and decided to organise a charity toy run where licensed motorcyclists would donate toys for families in need. Rev Simon Schwartz from Phillip Island Baptist Church, a motorcycle enthusiast connected with Jason and Samantha and the church partnered them in this amazing community initiative.

Carrying the toys with them, the riders started from Tooradin, following the South Gippsland/Bass Coast Highway via Grantville and San Remo with their final stop at the Phillip Island Baptist Church in Cowes where their donations were received.



Phillip Island Bakery and Bakers Delight generously donated the bread for the BBQ lunch afterwards with all funds raised going to the flood victims in the immediate area.

Apart from the huge turnout of local riders locally and those from across the region, there were also many volunteers including the Bass Coast Highway Patrol who directed traffic, and members from Phillip Island Baptist Church who handed out lollies, helped with the BBQ lunch and organised toys at the toy drop-off point.

Simon says, "We are excited about the new connections that have been and will be made, and it is exciting to see devoted Christians working side by side with people from within our community helping those who are doing it tough."

Toys will be donated in the coming days to families on Phillip Island doing it tough at Christmas time.



# NATIVITY IN DONNYBROOK



The Christmas Nativity has been running for two years in a row in Olivine Estate (Donnybrook) as an initiative of Donnybrook Community Church. Through their relationship with the community and with Michelle Mitchell (Grassroots Placemaker), they have had the opportunity to be part of the community carols two years running.

Typically they participate in both the caroling and provide the nativity as an interactive opportunity for individuals and families to come and have a photo with the baby Jesus. Thankfully, both years they've had a real baby to play the part! This year, even Santa wanted to get in on the action!

With the increasingly multi-ethnic community, they have noticed that many of the migrant families gravitate toward the nativity, and

the children especially love to become angels and shepherds through the interactive backdrop, which was designed during the height of the pandemic to enable safe socially-distanced photo opportunities!

The nativity is a conversation-starter, an opportunity to invite the community into the Christmas story (literally), and to the Christmas services in December.





# SCHOOL HOLIDAY WORKSHOPS FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN

with Camberwell Baptist Church's Mirye Park

Camberwell Baptist Church's Mirye Park organised a school holiday workshop specifically to help refugee children cope with the effects of the pandemic.

Seventeen children between years 4 to 11 attended the workshop at the Australia Zotung Church.

The workshop, which was inspired by Melbourne photographer and blogger Tamsien West, began in June of 2022 during the school holidays and has since helped young people reflect on their personal stories and express their emotions creatively.

Australia Zotung Church's Senior pastor Za Tuah (nguri) Ngur says, "We are so happy to have Mirye and her friend supporting us [with this program]... Our children thoroughly enjoyed the activity. The four days of learning the word, fellowshiping, and the journaling activity was valued by our children."

Creator Mirye Park says, "As mum of a teenager, I was looking for support for their mental health because of what they have been through during the pandemic."





# CARE PACKS FOR LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL VCE STUDENTS



The Young Adults group at NewHope Baptist Church put together VCE (Year 12) care packs to both encourage and celebrate finishing off their schooling!

The young adults made handwritten cards to encourage the local high school year 12 students to persevere.

A great example of #TogetherOnMission and doing it creatively!





# CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF FRIENDS OF DISMAS

Ten years ago, the BUV Support Hub, Churches of Christ VicTas, and Prison Fellowship Victoria combined to plant a church here in Melbourne called Friends of Dismas ('Dismas' being the traditional name of the repentant thief on the cross next to Jesus as mentioned in Luke 23:40-43).

Friends of Dismas is no ordinary church. Rather, it is a church whose mission is to assist motivated adults on parole, ex-prisoners and their family and friends, to grow in their Christian faith, to transition successfully into society, and to live a crime-free life. Celebrating its ten-year anniversary, Friends of Dismas now has three congregations in Victoria: one in Melbourne CBD, one in Box Hill and one in Geelong.

Their outreach ministries meet once a month via phone and once a month through the Victorian Correctional Facility in Ararat.

Their unique weekly services don't include the usual praise and worship sessions. Instead, members are asked specific questions that give them "a voice to speak and a right to be acknowledged".

Afterwards, they end with communion and the 'Dismas' prayer, which was a request from the originators of Friends of Dismas in Canada who happily allowed the church to use their name.

Knowledge of the church ministry is mainly shared through word of mouth. Rev Paul Moore says, "Often those who come to our meetings have histories and we don't want to prejudice meetings. We want to create a safe environment for everyone."

As they celebrate God's faithfulness over their mission and ministry during the last ten years, Rev Paul and the Friends of Dismas staff and volunteers are both grateful and excited for what God has done and will continue to do.

For those who are interested to learn more please visit the Friends of Dismas website here or to contact Rev Chris Barnden directly at [chris.barnden@buv.com.au](mailto:chris.barnden@buv.com.au). |

**"Friends of Dismas can be very raw and confronting but it really allows us to see God's work in this area."**

Paul Moore, the current Friends of Dismas pastor.

Kevin and Kathleen Maddock, the first Friends of Dismas pastors





# CELEBRATING ENCOUNTERS WITH JESUS



REV DANIEL BULLOCK CONDUCTING A HOME BAPTISM

*Let's celebrate and thank God for continuing to build disciples in and through our churches. The following pages show just a small snapshot of some churches in different contexts who have had recent baptisms here in Victoria.*

## BAPTISM AT HOME



On a sunny Sunday afternoon a few months ago, Rev Daniel Bullock baptised his sister in-law in a backyard pool. Her testimony of a God that had been at work in her life and had not given up on her was inspiring.

Daniel was also able to share with around 15 of her friends and family who had never stepped into a church in their lives, the reason for being baptised and the love and grace that Jesus has for all.





# ROCK CITY CHURCH

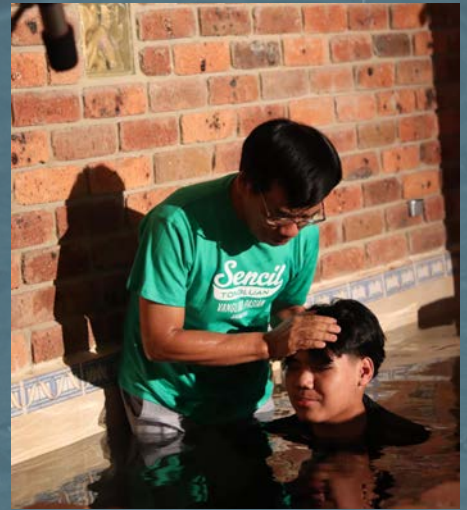
Three years ago I attended church for the first time thinking, "Keep your friends close, but your enemies even closer." The enemy that I thought would destroy my marriage turned out to be my Saviour who loves me and saved me. Jesus changed my heart and transformed my marriage. Today, I have a new identity in Jesus.

- Rock City Church  
Baptism service  
participant





# ZOMI MISSION CHURCH



On the 26th to the 29th of September 2022, the church leadership at Zomi Mission Church organised a Youth Camp to both evangelise and introduce afresh the saving work of Jesus to the younger generation.

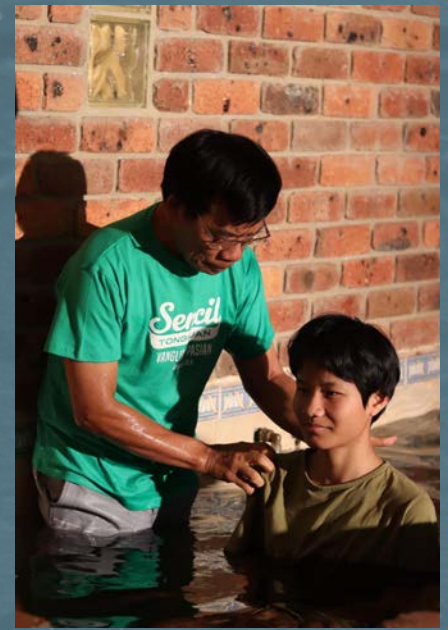
Held at Halls Gap Baptist Centre, the 98 campers (parents included), had an “online-free” experience at the camp, allowing them to be fully immersed in face-to-face conversations and interactions with another – playing and participating in activities. “It was a joy to witness,” says Pastor Piang Kham Sakte, the senior pastor of Zomi Mission Church.

To cater for the youth who were all first-generation immigrants from Myanmar, the church invited bilingual guest speakers Dr Gin Khan Khual and his wife Pastor Man, both of whom are also first-generation immigrants from Myanmar who immigrated to Oxford, England.



**Pastor Piang says, “The Lord used them mightily in communicating the gospel to our youths. [They spoke] the language of the young people who were occupying a challenging liminal space between spiritual and cultural [here in Australia].”**





With the morning hours spent in Bible Study and the rest of the day and evenings spent listening to the Gospel message and in discussion with one another, many young people decided to dedicate their lives to Christ!

On the 1st of October 2022 at Lilydale Baptist Church where the church holds their weekly Sunday services, 14 camp attendees were baptised!

"We are looking forward to more of the Lord's goodness!" Pastor Piang says.





# FRANKSTON COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH

Frankston Community Baptist Church held an Alpha course introductory dinner for 21 people with 20 people completing the course culminating in 4 baptisms.





# CELEBRATING NEW COMMUNITIES OF FAITH

In the last year we're excited to have welcomed to the BUV family:

## Newly constituent churches

- Cloverdale Karen Baptist Church
- Daylesford Community Church
  - Matu Immanuel Church
  - Nhill K'Naw Baptist Church
- Melbourne Karenni Baptist Community Church Inc
  - Shalom Church of Melbourne
- Gospel Baptist Church Australia
- Chin Baptist Church Pakenham





**New Micro Churches**

- Coastal Villages Faith Community
  - Croydon Hills
  - Friends First
- Aintree Micro Church
- Grace and Glory Pakenham



**New Faith Communities**

- Victorian Zokhuapeng Baptist Church
- Australian Christian Baptist Church



**Campuses or Congregations**

- Mill Park Baptist Church – Donnybrook Community Church
- Regeneration Church Monash – Regen Night Church
  - Sale Baptist Church – Yarram Campus
  - Sale Baptist Church – Loch Sport Campus





Morning tea chats  
 - Left to Right:  
 Anka Djuga, Jan  
 Graham, Marka  
 Kratica [Anka and  
 Marka are from  
 Kingsville Baptist]

Colour co-ordinated  
 - Tabyta Djuga &  
 Rev Julie Hunt  
 (pictured  
 below)



# CELEBRATING NEW BEGINNINGS OUT OF ENDINGS

Thirteen months ago, the congregation of Newport Baptist Church, led by Rev Julie Hunt, warmly welcomed into their church membership, a group of Slovakian Baptists (8 in total). Newport was to become their new church community after their previous church, Kingsville Baptist Church, made the courageous and difficult decision to permanently close for viability reasons.

Kingsville's journey to closure was lengthy and not without grief and sense of loss, however ultimately there was a recognition from the remaining members

that the decision and time to close was right.

As the end approached, just the Slovakian group remained, and they were keen to find a new church home. BUV Regional Pastor, Rev Chris Barnden, had begun a conversation with Julie Hunt about the possibility of the Slovaks joining Newport given the geographical proximity. Chris connected Julie with key leaders of the group - their pastor Samuel Sjanta, Tabyta Djuga, and her mother, Anna.

This initial connection evolved into a gentle and organic relationship between Julie and Tabyta as Julie provided pastoral care and a listening ear without any expectations of the Slovaks necessarily coming to Newport.

Julie helped Tabyta transition through the grief, the relief, and the letting go. Right from the beginning of exploring the possibilities however, there was a sense of God being very much in the conversations. When Pastor Samuel met Julie and toured the Newport facilities, he said that it was the place he had been praying about where his people could continue to meet.

groups, but having the Slovaks join has prompted them to embrace multiculturalism in more practical ways.

Examples of this are regular bible readings during Sunday worship in the different languages represented, including a hymn in the music each Sunday as these are songs well known to the Slovaks, and enjoying regular Slovakian morning teas.

Two of the Slovakian women have added their musical talents into the church's worship team, providing a much longed for keyboard player and worship leader.

**They were unanimous in their desire to welcome the Slovaks into the church community.**

During this time, Julie had kept Newport's leadership informed of the possibility of the Slovakian group potentially joining the church. They were unanimous in their desire to welcome the Slovaks into the church community as were the church members, and so, around 12 months on from initial discussions, Newport welcomed and received 8 Slovaks into church membership on Mother's Day 2021.

"They have been a blessing on so many different levels for us", Julie reflects. Newport is already a multicultural church with several people

In addition, Tabyta is now part of the church leadership team, providing a conduit to the Slovaks. Like many churches in recent times, Newport has experienced a drop in attendance due to COVID, and so having 8 new members who place a high priority on church engagement, service and contribution has been a definite positive.

Julie loves that the church has offered such an open and generous welcome to a new group of people.



Morning tea chats  
- Jordan Plumb  
and Anka Djuga  
[Anka is from  
Kingsville Baptist]



Colour co-ordinated  
- Anna Djuga &  
Sarah Thompson

Morning tea chats  
- Neel Pulipaka  
and Tabyta Djuga  
[Tabyta is from  
Kingsville Baptist]



Christmas Carols  
on the deck -  
Evelyn Smith  
(keyboard) Anna  
Djuga (violin) Josh  
Thompson (singer)  
[Evelyn & Anna are  
from Kingsville  
Baptist]

Although the integration is not without its challenges, Julie feels they are already at a point of “us” rather than “the Slovaks and us”. “It has been a God thing for the church and a beautiful blessing,” she says.

Recently, Chris Barnden caught up with Tabyta and Anna who spoke of the blessing it has been to them and their group to be so warmly welcomed into Newport Baptist Church. They went on to express their appreciation to the BUV (in particular Rev Chris Barnden and Rev Christine Wanstall who previously served as a BUV Church Health Consultant) for

the support and guidance received in the difficult decision of closure and transition. Julie Hunt also adds her gratitude for the assistance and wisdom of Chris and Christine.

All parties agree that God’s kindness and grace have been very evident in this outcome of a new beginning emerging out of an ending. To God be all the glory! |



# CELEBRATING EXPERIENCED IN MINISTRY



THE ANNUAL BUV EXPERIENCED IN MINISTRY LUNCHEON





# CELEBRATING ALAN MARR AND THE EXPERIENCED IN MINISTRY GROUP

Rev Alan Marr, Rev Daniel Bullock and Rev Tony Cupitt

The BUV's Experienced in Ministry (EIM) group is a wonderful group made up of retired BUV pastors and their spouses, pastors over the age of 65 years, widowers of former pastors and ex-missionaries. There are currently around 400 people in the BUV's Experienced in Ministry group.

Over the last 10 years, Rev Alan Marr has not only been the Coordinator of this group, which has the mandate to care for and maintain connection of its members with each other and the BUV, but has also coordinated the Experienced in Ministry Care Group who take a larger role in the pastoral care of its members. The Care group meet 3-4 times a year for prayer and coordination under the direction of Alan.

The BUV Support Hub hosts an annual Experienced in Ministry lunch to gather friends and colleagues together and to connect them with current Support Hub staff and hear about what is going on in the life of the union.

At the lunch last week, Alan (although not present due to sickness) announced that he will step down as the Coordinator of the Experienced in Ministry Group this year. ***"I have enjoyed the time immensely. My love and commitment to our retired colleagues has not diminished but I feel unable to continue at the same level. I am deeply grateful to the wonderful team I was able to gather around me. I want to thank them all for their unwavering support and for making the journey so enjoyable."***



Alan, thanks for all your love and care for Experienced in Ministry pastors and their spouses. Your genuine kindness through emails, calls, visits, prayers and follow-ups have helped so many be greatly encouraged.

- Rev Jonathan Stark

On behalf of the EIM Care Team I'd like to express how greatly we have appreciated Alan's ministry and tireless work he has done in visiting and contacting people in great need. He has spoken at many thanksgiving services and has done a lot of administration keeping us all informed. He has spent 100s of hours of time in this way and we really appreciate his great pastoral heart for people and his significant ministry.

- Geoff Rowse

Dear Alan, what a ministry you have had. Your commitment to caring for our pastors has been outstanding and it has been a joy to work with you.

-Geoff + Jenny

A member of the EIM Care group mentioned that in his role as Coordinator of the group, "Alan was using his God given gift of pastoral care to the max - Alan would not let anything get in the way of caring for someone, even if he had different views to that person. He was absolutely operating in his sweet spot. Thank you for your amazing contribution Alan! May God richly bless you."

*Many of the EIM Care group are mature in age and there is an opportunity for some younger members who are experienced in ministry to join the EIM pastoral care group. It's a lovely way to continue being pastoral even after your official pastoral ministry has concluded. If you would like to join, please contact Rev Jonathan Stark on (03) 9880 6119 or send an email to [jonathan.starke@buv.com.au](mailto:jonathan.starke@buv.com.au)*

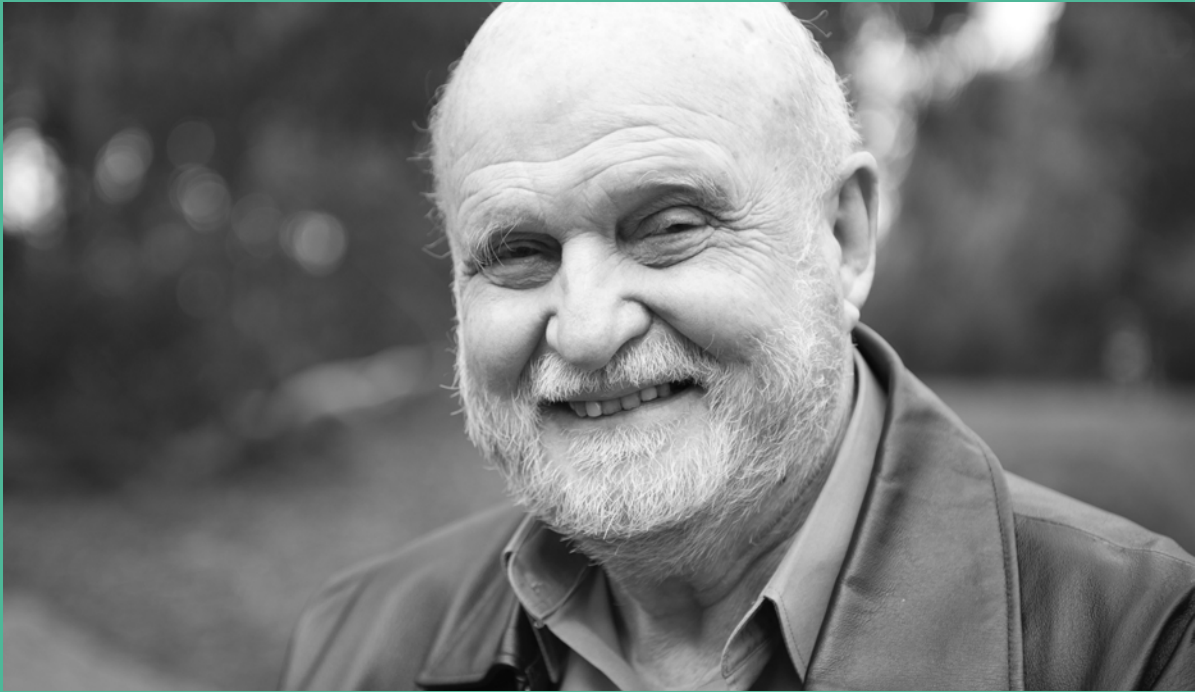






The annual BUV Experienced in Ministry luncheon





# CELEBRATING KENNETH MANLEY

**Early this year at our May Nourish, a special milestone was marked - the 60th anniversary since Rev. Dr. Kenneth Manley's ordination as a Baptist pastor.**

For over 60 years, Ken has been involved in Baptist ministry at state, national and international levels and known particularly in recent years for his exceptional contribution to Baptist history. He became a Baptist pastor in Sydney after school teaching, and then undertook further study at Bristol and Oxford Universities in the UK. He has been pastor of Baptist churches at Narwee, Armidale, Faringdon (UK), Pymble and Epping. He has lectured in three Baptist Colleges: South Australia where he was Vice-Principal,

Morling College in Sydney and Whitley College here in Melbourne where he was Principal. Ken is author of several publications in Baptist history as well as his own autobiography and has served as a Vice-President of the Baptist World Alliance. He also served a term as President of the BUV.

At the age of 87, Ken remains actively engaged in Baptist life - as editor with the Victorian Baptist Historical Society, through his research and writing, along with involvement in his local church, Kew Baptist. His service here has included a year of interim ministry, a role he accepted post retirement

after the untimely death of the church's senior pastor, Rod Pell in 2010.

Ken's vocational life has always been rooted in his sense of calling as a Baptist pastor. "I wasn't a historian who came to pastoral ministry but was a pastor who came to history through my vocation. It's been an interesting and unpredictable course," he reflects.

Ken speaks of his years in pastoral ministry with affection. Each church was very different, and he experienced the joys, fulfillment and challenges that go with pastoral life. His first student pastorate in Sydney was in the fast-growing suburb of Narwee.



Ken preaching at Serampore College India



Ken preaching at Whitley chapel

**"Ken Manley is undoubtedly Australia's foremost Baptist historian. Throughout his adult life, his commitment to living, teaching, researching and writing the Baptist story is legendary. The quality of his research is unquestioned and recognised internationally as well as nationally."**

– Rev Dr Marita Munro



Looking back, Ken recollects he was very much growing up with the congregation, it being his first experience as a pastor.

Ken's time in teaching and leading in the theological college context were "good years". It was in 1987 that Ken and his family moved to Melbourne and he took on the Principal role at Whitley College. He describes this era as a time of great growth for the College.

Being involved in Baptist World Alliance for Ken was a rich time of fellowship and of expanding his network as he got to meet many Baptists from around the world. He describes his term as Vice-President in particular as a great experience.

Since retirement in 2000, Ken's main output has been in research and writing, something he continues to enjoy, and he has a number of projects still on the go. He is a published author of several books, contributor and editor of others, and is editor of *Our Yesterdays*, an annual publication from the Victorian Baptist Historical Society.

At least two of Ken's books are biographies of significant Baptist people in Australia's history. In the writing of these, Ken has written the life of that person, but has intentionally used their biography to illuminate Baptist denominational life at that time.

We celebrate and honour Ken Manley for his remarkable contribution to the Baptist world over so many years. We give thanks to God for the many lives he has touched through his pastoral ministry, theological teaching, his research and writing and the many other ways he has served and indeed continues to do so. We echo some of his favourite words (a quotation from Dag Hammarskjold) which forms the title of his 2018 autobiography "For all that has been - thanks!" |

**"These are challenging and changing times, but the basics have always been there - teaching, caring, evangelising, a life of discipleship that leads others.**

**Know your gifts, seek God's grace to use them and find the ministries that allow you to express those gifts."**

- Ken Manley

# CHRISTMAS & ADVENT RESOURCES



## BUY CHRISTMAS DEVOTIONS FAITH, HOPE, LOVE

Looking at the theme of faith, hope and love, Kimberly Smith, Rev Jonathan Stark and Rev Chris Barnden take you through what the fruits of the spirit mean in the season of Advent. [Click here](#)



## COMMON GRACE - THE GOOD

This Advent devotional series will invite Australian Christians to be present to Jesus, to each other, and to the world around us this Advent season, so that our faith is nurtured, our love is stimulated and our hope is energised. [Click here](#) to sign up to receive this series in your inbox from Thursday 1 December.



## BAPTIST WORLD AID - BETTER WORLD GIFTS

Better World Gifts are meaningful, ethical, and fun. Each card has a beautiful image which represents the impact of your donation, on behalf of your loved one. They're perfect for the family member with everything, or the friend who is passionate about building a better world. [Click here.](#)



## CROSSOVER - MISSING PEACE

Missing Peace? is an Advent and Christmas series developed by Crossover. It is adaptable for use in all kinds of churches, highly inevitable, and full of the great news about Jesus. The series title, 'Missing Peace?' is of course a two-sided play on words. It calls to all who thirst for peace, and hints at a 'missing piece' which is Christ the cornerstone. [Click here](#)







INTRODUCING

# REV TOBY BAXTER

THE NEW HEAD OF MISSION CATALYST

Toby is passionate about partnering with God and others to help people flourish economically, socially, emotionally and spiritually within communities of hope.

Toby has 30 years of experience in community work with people doing life tough and has helped mobilise over 3,000 community mentors to work with vulnerable people. He is the co-founder of COACH Community Mentoring and Empowered Faith Communities ministries which, when combined, have multiplied into just under 200 communities across Australia and the UK. He has recently published a book called Ordinary Mentoring for Extra-Ordinary Transformation. He is an ordained Baptist pastor as well as a registered Australian Social Worker.

Toby has a Masters in Ministry as well as honours degrees in Social Work and Economics. For 30 years he has been married to Laura and has three children: Joshua, Zac and Molly. In his spare time he loves to kayak, and run.

AND

# REV BETH JACKSON

THE NEW HEAD OF ORDINATION

Beth began with the BUV in October of 2022. Prior to that, Beth served churches in mission and pastoral roles for more than 20 years in the US, the UK, Hungary, and most recently, in New South Wales for 11 years. In addition to her pastoral work, Beth has been teaching as an adjunct lecturer in the area of pastoral theology for the past 8 years. Beth loves the local church in all of its varied expressions and believes that, at its best, is a wonderful gift of God to the world. She is married to Darrell and they have two teenagers who ensure there is always an animated dinner conversation!





# pastoral news

For more news and updates please visit [www.buv.com.au/pastoral-movements](http://www.buv.com.au/pastoral-movements)



*RMF Halls Gap*



*Ordination Transfer of Pastor Ram Mang Lawngsang and Pastor Van Cin Thang Lahinini*



*Lakes Entrance Baptist Church crew discuss future church planting*



*EMERGE 2020 Pathway Cohort Celebration Lunch*



*Tim Costello sharing with the Emerge cohort*



*Leaders from Epsom Community Church gather together*



*Tim Dyer, Tony Burgum and Darryl McKerlie moving on in ministry*



*October 2022 Gathering*



*North West Pastors catch up in Bendigo*



Each issue of TOGETHER, we will share some news from a couple of our BUV Agencies.

## Baptcare



### Spiritual Care Week

Spiritual Care Week (23-29 October this year), is a time to promote and celebrate the spiritual profession and its practitioners; those who care and help to cure those in need.

A huge shoutout to Baptcare's Spiritual Care team (pictured) who work across the Residential Aged Care, In Home Care and Family and Community Services spaces. The Head of Spiritual Care (SC), Geoff Wraight, acknowledges the importance of spiritual care in times of crisis but highlights the generous breadth of care given by his team of Spiritual Carers on a 'standard' daily basis, too:

*"Our Spiritual Carers are trained and supported to be relevant and responsive in every situation. They are part of Baptcare's commitment to whole person care, to making real the meaning of 'partnering for fullness of life' as it emerges from our rich spiritual heritage."*

 Baptist Financial Services



### BFS Celebrates Online Milestones

BFS has been very active in the online space, performing some important work on their online giving platform, Giveway. Giveway is designed to make it possible for churches and organisations to collect electronic payments simply and safely. Over the past year, Giveway has been successfully upgraded and migrated to a new platform, and now offers the significant benefits of reporting and receipting functions. Additionally, they've supported the development of the Safer Spaces Toolkit, a web-based program which is already changing the way churches address the issue of domestic violence in Christian communities. They have also performed a major revamp of the online Church Finance Handbook, a resource to support church employees and volunteers in their church roles. BFS looks forward to further collaboration and partnership that will enable Christian ministry to thrive.





## PARTNERING WITH LAKES ENTRANCE BAPTIST CHURCH

When the Bushfires ravaged much of our State in 2019/20, people in Baptist Churches across Victoria responded to a BUV Support Hub Appeal and together raised \$600,000. Over the past three years this money has played a significant role in many people’s lives in the relief and recovery work.

When a group of those who had been involved in this recovery work gathered at the end of 2021 to reflect, every person had a story of someone that they knew was alive today because they had turned up at the right time to help. All our teams have significant stories about being known as people who cared, came back and got things done. All thanks to those who generously gave.

This is now playing out in all sorts of ways in each of the communities and in Lakes Entrance it is about to have an extended focus. The Bushfire recovery work still progresses as teams respond to needs that are still arising, but in addition to that Lakes Entrance Baptist Church (LEBC) are responding to another felt need in the communities.



Part of the significant feedback we heard from those who had been on the receiving end of Bushfire Relief and Recovery was the number of times people benefitted from those in our teams who were pastorally oriented, and who made time to sit down with a cup of tea or coffee and listen to their stories.

This has generated interest in spiritual discussions and an overall curiosity as to what lies beneath the motivation of so many people who have given so much of their time and resource to help them through such a difficult time. The team at LEBC started thinking about what they could do about this apart from just inviting people to their church (which in many cases would be a long drive). Given that they had developed a significant number of trustworthy relationships right across the East Gippsland region, they started thinking about developing a network of smaller faith communities that could meet in specific locations.

Andrew Hill, from the BUV Support Hub, joined this conversation and introduced the concept of Micro Churches which was very close to what they were envisaging. Andrew spent time with the Carlises and their leadership team talking it through and as a consequence LEBC applied for a Grant from the BUV Support Hub to help support the project.

In November this year the Grant gained overwhelming support and approval from the BUV Support Hub and now LEBC are not only continuing their recovery work in the region, they are now purposefully able to continue building those relationships developing communities of faith for those who are interested but not able to make the journey into the fellowship at Lakes Entrance.

We are excited about the ongoing impact this will have on the lives of those who have had to deal with the ongoing ramifications of such significant loss and look forward to keeping you updated with good news stories from this region.

If you would like to partner with this venture (and others that are emerging) please visit the [BUV's Give page](#) or click the image below.



*Andrew Naylor is the  
BUV Partnership Development Pastor*

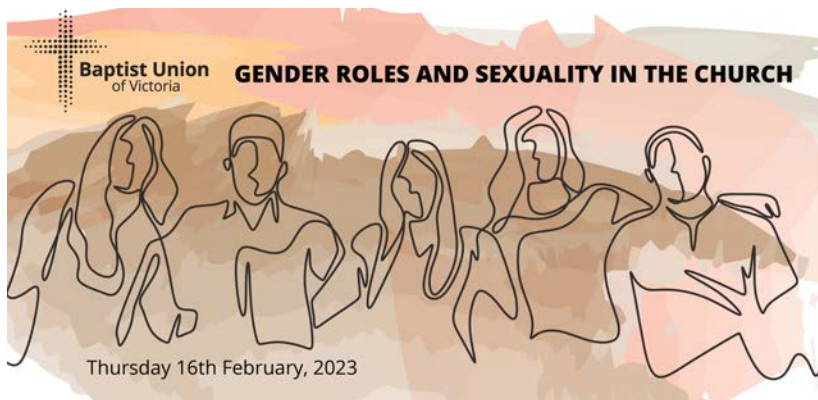
***"A lot of people giving a little can make  
a remarkable difference."***



If you'd like to talk more about any of these programmes or initiatives, please contact me via email [andrew.naylor@buv.com.au](mailto:andrew.naylor@buv.com.au) or call the BUV Support Hub on (03) 9880 6100



# UPCOMING EVENTS



In 2023, the BUV is hosting an event on the topic of Gender Roles and Sexuality in the Church. The issue of gender roles and sexuality in the religious arena has been highlighted again with the recent sacking of Andrew Thorburn from Essendon Football Club due to his role as Chairman of Anglican church, City on Hill and their assumed values clash.

Guest Speaker, Dr Christa McKirland, PhD, ThM, MA, BA (Hons), and Lecturer in Systematic Theology from Carey Baptist Theological College in New Zealand will speak on 3 main themes: Why God is For Women in Ministry, Women in the Home and LGBTQIA+ Christians and the Church. The event is open to **all** church leaders and congregation members and will be held **from 9:00am to 3:30pm** at **Syndal Baptist Church**. Early bird registrations are open now.

[Click here to register.](#)

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## EMERGE NEXT STEPS IN LEADERSHIP 2023

February 21, April 11 & June 13  
Resource/training experiences for aspiring leaders Baptist

Free online event | Register [here](#).

## 2023 CREATING SAFE SPACES WORKSHOPS

Begin on the 25 February | Many dates and locations available for the first half of 2023. Creating Safe Spaces is helpful for anyone but if you hold a particular position or role (paid or volunteer) in a BUV Church. For example: Pastors, Elders/Deacons, Children and Youth Coordinators, Children's and Youth Team Members, Ministry Coordinators, Safe Church team members, Anyone working with vulnerable adults | [Register here](#).

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## 2023 CONSULTATION FORUMS DATES

Dates for the BUV Consultation Forums have been locked in for March 2023 with 6 forums across the state, including an online forum.

- 2 March - Camberwell (BUV Office)
- 9 March - Bendigo
- 15 March - Beaconsfield
- 22 March - Geelong
- 23 March - Warrnambool
- 30 March - Online

### Topics to be discussed:

1. How can we be best equipped for effective fruitful Evangelism in 21st century Australia (define, demystify and explore what evangelism looks like in the future)
2. Indigenous Voice to Parliament

Bookings for Consultation Forums will be open for registration early in the new year with resource packs available upon registration. Forums are open to any member and we encourage all churches to be involved in these discussions.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## MARRIAGE CELEBRANT TRAINING

Thurs, 16 March | Resource/training day for new and experienced celebrants who are in need of a refresher training.

\$59.95 booking fee (profits donated to charity)  
| In-person at the BUV Support Hub | [Register here.](#)

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## CHURCH ADMIN WORKSHOP

Sat, 29 April | Resource/training day for anyone interested in learning about church administration, properties, finance, governance, insurance, professional standards and safe church responsibilities.

Free in-person at the BUV Support Hub | [Register here.](#)

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## MAY 2023 MEMBERS DINNER

Friday 26 May |  
KKarralyka Centre, Mines Rd, Ringwood VIC 3134

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## IGNITE

Saturday 1 July |  
BUV's Ignite Multicultural Youth and Young Adults Conference - Save the date and watch out for more information

## COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FOR SENIOR/LEAD/CAMPUS PASTORS

A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE for Senior/Lead/Campus Pastors is a joint initiative, between the BUV, the local church and Partners in Ministry. This is a one-year leadership development opportunity in community that can permanently impact a pastor's ministry trajectory by -

- Working with a group of 8-10 other Baptist pastors to facilitate growing as healthy pastors leading healthy churches, and developing healthy leaders who develop healthy leaders.
- Nurturing and growing leadership skills, abilities, and gifts for decades of fruitful ministry.
- Encouraging self-care to impact longevity in vocational pastoral leadership.
- Leading and developing others as they walk closer with Jesus.

The Community of Practice is jointly facilitated by Bill Brown and Kimberly Smith from the BUV Support Hub and John Jeffries from Partners in Ministry. It includes an overnight retreat, completing a 360 degree Leadership Practices Inventory, 6 professional supervision sessions and 5 gatherings throughout the year.

Contact Bill Brown on 0407821784 or at [bill.brown@buv.com.au](mailto:bill.brown@buv.com.au) if you are keen to explore it.



# ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT JUSTICE ADVOCACY

Joining the BUV Justice and Advocacy group is an opportunity for you to focus, reflect and take action for those who experience the challenges, inequalities, and often systemic barriers to fulfilling a flourishing life.

Now, more than ever, is a time to join in with the Spirit as one body, to discern again the ways in which we all can participate in the healing of the world.

If you are interested and/or passionate about justice, please send your expression of interest to **[missioncatalyst@buv.com.au](mailto:missioncatalyst@buv.com.au)**

## ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT SERVING?

Did you know that the Baptist Union is looking for people with skills and expertise in specific areas to serve on boards and committees? Or, do you know someone that may be interested?

Areas of skills required include:

- Pastoral Leadership
- Advocacy / passion for justice
- Property - Building & Construction / Engineering / Local Council
- Risk Management
- Legal
- HR
- Finance
- Education - early learning, primary / secondary and higher theological education
- Theology

Please [click here](#) to view the various boards and committees that have vacancies and would be happy to accept expressions of interest.

# december calendar



We love to be praying for our churches and their ministries. Join us as we pray for one church each day.

december 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
				Church by the Bay	City Baptist Church	Clarinda Baptist Church
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
Cloverdale Baptist Community Church	Cloverdale Karen Baptist Church	Coastal Villages Faith Community	Coburg Baptist Church	Cohuna Baptist Church	Colac Baptist Church	Collins Street Baptist Church
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
Community Church of St Mark (Clifton Hill Baptist)	Community of the Transfiguration	Compassion Christian Church Inc	Connect Baptist Church Ballarat	Corryong Baptist Church	Crosspoint Baptist Church	Crossway Baptist Church
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
Croydon Hills Baptist Church	Croydon Hills Micro Church	Dandenong Baptist Church	Darebin Samoan Baptist Fellowship	Daylesford Community Church	Diamond Valley Baptist Church	Doreen Baptist Church
<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>
	Doveton Baptist Church	Drouin Baptist Church	Earthen Vessels Church	East Camberwell Baptist Church	East Doncaster Baptist Church	Eastern Chinese Baptist Church

For more prayer and devotions resources, please visit [buu.com.au/pray](http://buu.com.au/pray)



# *Have a Good News Story of your own?*

*Send through your Good News Stories to  
[comms@buvm.com.au](mailto:comms@buvm.com.au)*



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