

July 2015



# BELONGING PEOPLE



*Jesus is Risen!*

# The President's Message



It is really interesting to see the different ways in which Easter was celebrated throughout the Baptist Churches of the Northern Territory. When I see this it really makes me think of the way that God is seen, not only through different churches but through the different members of his body.

It is easy for us at times to think that the way we celebrate, worship, pray, meditate, or minister is a true display of who God is. I think the truth is much more broad than that. When Jesus was talking to the Samaritan woman in John he said the following,

*“But the time is coming--indeed it's here now--when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.”* John 4:23-24 NLT

What was Jesus saying? That true worship is not in form or place, but in the heart of the worshippers.

We have to remember that God in his fullness is not displayed in one person, or one method, or even one denomination. It takes every member of the church to enable us all to see a more complete picture of who he is. It would be a good exercise to look upon your brothers and sisters and ask the question, ‘How is God being revealed to me through them?’

**Neil Wright**

**Front cover:**  
***A young girl discovers the empty tomb. Read how Darwin Baptist Church celebrated Easter this year in a very creative way. P 4&5***

## 46th ANNUAL ASSEMBLY of the BAPTIST UNION of the NORTHERN TERRITORY



**I**ts God’s Story, and He invites us into it. This was the central message from Guest Speaker at Assembly, **Rev Dr. Stephen Spence** of Tabor College, Adelaide. Delegates were reminded and encouraged that God has gone before in every situation and we are players in His story. “In the beginning GOD...” Genesis 1:1. “God is not bound by space and time”, stated Stephen.

Delegates gathered at Darwin Baptist Church on Saturday, 13 June to hear reports from the Ministry teams of BUNT and from the President, Neil Wright and other officers including the Treasurer, Vivian Carson. Reports from the churches represented at Assembly were also received with interest and discussion.

One of the key discussions surrounded the issue of how to involve the younger generation and our Indigenous brothers and sisters in the NT Baptist movement and how to reshape the Annual Assembly to motivate and involve more churches.

The current Marriage Equality debate was a topic of keen concern and the Assembly strongly supported the Biblical definition of marriage as being “between one man and one woman freely entered into for life”.

**Andrea Adams**

# *The HeART of Easter at Darwin Baptist Church*

**E**aster Sunday was an extra special celebration at Darwin Baptist Church this year. Inspired by the verse “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it produces many seeds” John (12:24), our church family celebrated Easter in a very creative way.

In the weeks leading up to the celebration, church members were asked to paint, draw, sculpt, write, chisel, shape and mould their interpretation of this verse and by Sunday, we had an amazing collection of art pieces.

In fact with so many people developing their ideas in so many different ways, it took almost an hour to move about the church grounds to see and reflect on each creation. As well as paintings, we had sketches, sculptures, scrapbooking pieces, woodcarving, puppet shows, singing, poetry and public readings.

We ended our wonderful “HeART of Easter” morning with two baptisms. It was indeed a day to rejoice and celebrate!

***Kate Woods***



***Easter Sunday Baptisms***



***One of the Art works produced to reflect the meaning of Easter***

***Children and parents enjoy a creative puppet show  
on Easter Sunday***



# EASTER AT YUENDUMU

**Y**uendumu Baptist Church hosted Easter 2015. Communities from Willowra, Lajamanu, Kalkaringi, Papunya, among others, all joined together to celebrate Easter.

The leaders of the church, Tess Ross, Eddie and Lottie Dickson, Alan and Jean Brown worked together organising the events over the weekend.. Everyone joined in with sing-alongs, testimonies, BBQ and a combined Sunday morning Service.

90 year old Judy Ngaparnardi Watson went home on Saturday night, but woke hearing Wapirra (God) speak to her, "Come to Wapirra". On Easter Sunday morning Judy was baptised surrounded by friends and family. It was a very moving Baptism!

## THE CROSS

**"You should see the cross! It is amazing!"**

**H**ard stony ground did not deter Stephen Kelly on Good Friday from beginning to dig the hole for the cross on the hill overlooking the town. Despite being sick, he began the difficult job of preparing the hole for the cross to be settled in. Stephen and Francis Kelly, Malcolm and crew all went up the hill on Sunday and completed digging the hole. Young Darren Kelly worked hard alongside the crew.

On Sunday a 30ft, white cross was driven up the hill by two troopies and a front end loader, with many onlookers on the way. The cross was concreted in and now stands tall for all to see. "Everyone is very proud of the cross and it has been visited by all", says Tess Ross.

*Pauline Morrison*



*The Amazing Cross at Yuendumu*

## ***GOD'S LIVING WATER***

**T**he annual Katherine Christian Convention was a wonderful, inspiring and learning time around the theme 'God's Living Water' which brought over 1000 people from communities and towns to Morrows Farm on May 2-3, 2015. Most people camped and shared fellowship over the weekend. They heard Guest Speaker, Rob Haynes preach using Bible readings from Genesis 1 all the way through to Revelation 22.



**Katherine Warlpiri, Lajamanu and Kalkaringi Baptist Churches** were three of twenty five (25) churches participating. Kalkaringi and Lajamanu churches both organised buses to travel into Katherine to the Convention.



On Saturday afternoon folk from both Kalkaringi and Lajamanu communities joined together to lead the worship for the opening session. Jerry Jangala read from the Warlpiri Bible and church leaders prayed. A highlight on Saturday night was Jerry performing a song and playing the boomerangs.



The Sunday night Song Festival is always eagerly anticipated with many folk taking the stage to encourage worship with music, song and dance. The women and children from the Katherine Warlpiri Baptist Church sang loudly accompanied by Adrian Cook on the keyboard.



## ***Morrison's on the Move***

**W**ith the retirement of their colleagues, Norm and Karen Roberts, Bill and Pauline Morrison's role has changed for this year. They write, "We will be calling in at the communities of Yuendumu, Willowra and Ali Curung to encourage them while the search continues for a Support Worker for this region, as well as seeking the best way to serve these communities. For us this means a lot more travelling, as the distances between our communities (Kalkaringi and Lajamanu) and these communities are vast.

### ***Family Tragedy Following Katherine Convention***

Bill and Pauline have conveyed the following sad news. On returning from the Katherine Convention, Hector and Lillian Patterson's 14 year old daughter was killed in a car accident 10km out of Lajamanu. Hector is a church leader and both are respected members of the community.

***PLEASE PRAY FOR.....***

***Hector and Lillian Patterson and their family as they grieve the loss of their daughter. May God comfort and sustain them.***

***Safe travel for Bill and Pauline as they drive long distances to serve the widespread indigenous churches.***



## *Reaching out to Women in the Sex Industry*

Darwin is the 'Gateway to Asia' and many Christians feel a real burden to reach out to the women who have come to Australia to work in the massage parlours and brothels. Rahab Darwin commenced in April 2015 and volunteers recently received training from leaders of Rahab Adelaide.

**Rahab** is a ministry that reaches out to those who feel trapped in the sex industry in Darwin. Rahab's vision is to restore, inspire and assist so women may discover their God-given identity and find fulfillment in life. It provides them with the chance to reach a turning point just like Rahab did in the Bible.

***"The women who work in this industry are forgotten by many. Ignored. But God has not forgotten them!"***

Rahab volunteers go on outreach to visit women in brothels and on the street. We bring gifts to the women to show that they are loved and that Christians care for them. Would you like to be part of God's plan to bring liberty to the captives and freedom from darkness for the prisoners?

There are many ways you or your church can be involved -

- **PRAY FOR US!!** Join our prayer team.
- Make or donate items such as soap, hand cream, perfume, scented sachets, which will be made into gift packs
- Make a financial donation.
- Join our team and come with us on outreach.
- Join our mailing list to keep informed

**If you'd like to know more contact Dee Avery at [deeavery@live.com.au](mailto:deeavery@live.com.au) or on 0408 024 449**



## *Easter at Nhulunbuy*

**T**he combined churches of Nhulunbuy gathered on the beach for the 2015 Easter service. What was notable was that there were more people at this service than there were last year, even though the town is much smaller.



## *The Church in a Cupboard*

**T**he population of Nhulunbuy is now about half of what it was a year ago yet the same number of people are attending church! And so the '**Church in a Cupboard**' continues to thrive. We meet at the Nhulunbuy Town Hall where the cupboard is unpacked each Sunday and repacked after the service. God is at work in this place. ***Pray that we will be ready to do His will.***

***Matt Brazier***

## WORDS WITH WARREN

*Warren Douglas serves on the Pastoral Team at Darwin Baptist Church.*

*Please tell us about your life and family before full-time ministry.*

Before God called me into full-time ministry I was employed as a Network Engineer and spent most of my married life on the Central Coast of NSW. My wife Liz and I moved there soon after being married and all our four children (Lauren, Ashlea, Bradley & Naomi) were born and grew up there.

*How has faith in Jesus influenced your life?*

For much of my life I was very selfish and through some significant painful life experiences Jesus slowly helped me change and learn to love God and others more. After being called by God to serve him, I struggled to let go of career and financial security. Initially I tried many investment schemes to provide for my family while I studied, until God told me to just trust him as father to provide and he has always met our needs. Recently Jesus has been encouraging me regarding the importance of abiding with him and not being busy doing ministry. This has allowed me to spend more time in the Lord's presence through prayer and scripture reading and is also leading me to a new level of obedience to Jesus.

*What are you passionate about?*

Two of my special passions are sport and evangelism and I have been able to combine these through playing social soccer nearly every weekend. Various cultures (Afghan, Burmese, and Africans) join together and friendships have developed over the years, which have also given me an opportunity to share my love for Jesus.

God has also given me a passion to look out for those who are lonely or disadvantaged. **Food For Life** is a wonderful ministry of Casuarina Baptist Church that supports those in financial need and I have been privileged to serve with them as a volunteer.

*What are some significant changes to your life since moving to the NT?*

Before moving to Darwin I had no connection with people from other cultures and was sceptical of refugees seeking asylum in Australia. When we arrived I immediately became involved as a volunteer with Melaleuca, which is an organisation that helps new refugees settle into Darwin. After having met refugees and asylum seekers in detention my whole attitude changed and I have now become a strong advocate for those seeking safety and protection in our country.

*Describe your ministry at Darwin Baptist Church*

Serving at DBC has been a real pleasure and learning experience for me because I am part of a great pastoral team led by Mal Sercombe. My ministry concentrates on encouraging discipleship through small groups, young adults and youth. I have also had the opportunity to facilitate numerous training courses such as Freedom in Christ and to be involved in the men's ministry known as BATS (Blokes at the Shed).



*Warren and wife, Liz, at the wedding of their daughter, Lauren*

## **STAND UP AND BE HEARD!**

### ***A Pastor Speaks Out***

Right now in Australia, we have the current debate around what is commonly referred to as “marriage equality”, but what I refer to as the redefinition of marriage to include same sex couples. From a Christian perspective this is wrong, yet when we voice our opinion we are shouted down as bigots, homophobic and out of touch.

Friends the reason that our current marriage debate is happening is because a minority group made a lot of noise. So, how many of us wrote an email or letter to their local federal member stating our disapproval, or how many interacted via social media? How many of us wrote letters to the editor saying that we do not agree? Why is there not more protest from Christians when these things happen? Why do we silently sit back and say nothing? Do we think that God wants us to not be involved? We cannot sit back and allow the “Australian Christian Lobby” and other prominent Christians to do all the work. We need to “stand up and make a noise” when decisions are made that go against the will of God. We need to let people know that we are not happy. No, we cannot force culture to change, but that does not mean that we are not allowed to speak into it and have our own voice, providing we use that voice with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15).

In an excellent article titled, Christians in Exile, Stephen McAlpine asserts, “... we assume that we can have more impact on culture than it can have on us. That is dangerously naive thinking. Jesus never said, “The culture will misunderstand you”. He said, “The world will hate you.” He did not say to his disciples, “Display reckless abandon and go out there and change culture,” he said “Fear not, I have overcome the world.”(John 16:33).

More on this can be found at <http://stephenmcalpine.com/2015/05/28/christian-are-you-ready-for-exile-stage-two/>

Grace, peace and blessings,

***Pastor Paul Avery***  
***Casuarina Baptist Church***



## ***‘The Church At Wickham Point’***

**\*Hossein, Abdul, Mohammad, Saeid, Jacob, Behrouz, Alireza....**

These are some of the young men who are currently meeting to pray and study the Scriptures together. There are fifteen altogether, from countries such as Iran, Fiji and Sri Lanka. What brings this unusual group together? They are all asylum seekers living in the Wickham Point Detention Centre near Darwin.

They can be called “**The Church at Wickham Point**” – for that’s what they are. They are God’s people, linked by their common faith in Jesus, and seeking to follow him and be his witnesses where they live. All of them have fled their own countries, searching for a new life. None of them have achieved that yet, and in the current climate, hopes are fading. However, most of them have found Jesus since they fled, and this has opened up a whole new horizon. Life now has boundless opportunities, regardless of Government policies.



These young men meet every night for an hour. Every night! They manage to overcome the language barriers by using a mixture of English and their own languages. As they open the Word, discuss what they read, and pray afterwards, it is truly spiritual food that will sustain them through dark times when hope seems to be out of reach, and when family members are so far away.

Recently, four of these men were able to fulfill a long-term desire to be baptized. At last the opportunity to testify to their faith was theirs, and the joy in their faces told the story.

***Rev. John Whitbourn***  
***Casuarina Baptist Church***

***\*The names above are commonly used names in their respective countries. Actual names and faces are not published for security reasons.***

## *Greetings from the Roberts in Bendigo*

We are enjoying the season changes back in Victoria after life in the NT Outback. We have had a lovely extended leave time this past 6 months with Global Interaction, as we officially leave the Mission on July 13th after 11 years service. What a blessing working with the Yapa has been since 2004. We thank God, the Mission, the Yapa, and BUNT for journeying with us across the years. Norm has been applying for various Chaplaincy and Indigenous related jobs in Bendigo and we would appreciate your prayers going forward.

Our love to all you BUNT people,

*Norm & Karen Roberts*



## *Easter Celebrated by Warlpiri Churches*

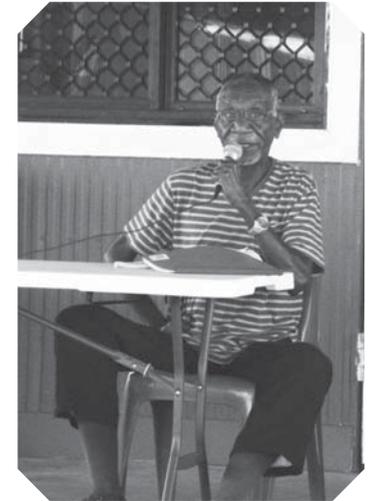
**Knuckey Lagoon Baptist Fellowship** celebrated Easter with a Worship Service where they reflected on the true meaning of Easter, The first Communion Service was celebrated this Easter and John Baynes spoke from God's Word about the death and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. John shared how the Lord led him and Carmen to serve at Knuckey Lagoon. Carmen regularly takes Sunday School with the children to share the love of Jesus through Bible stories, crafts and having fun and games.

**The Warlpiri Baptist Church** in Katherine invited the community to celebrate Easter at the Sunday Worship Service. Adrian Cook and Herbert Mosquito shared God's Word and the women sang. All in all, it was a great time of fellowship, prayer and testimonies.



## *Growing Leaders at Knuckey Lagoon*

Gideon Tasman used to be an Auto Mechanic by trade working in the Tanami Desert with a mining company until he and his family moved to Lajamanu where he was employed in the local Automotive Shop. Several years ago Gideon became seriously ill. When his condition worsened doctors told him that both his legs would need to be amputated. Gideon faced this adversity with great courage and now has prosthetic legs. He continues to faithfully serve the Lord but in a new location, on the outskirts of Darwin.



Gideon is growing into a valued leader in the Knuckey Lagoon Fellowship. He is a great man of God and his faithfulness is evident in his commitment and involvement Sunday to Sunday in worship services and in Prayer time during the week. He is being mentored and encouraged by John and Carmen Baynes.

They are praying that God will use Gideon Tasman to lead the church at Knuckey Lagoon and minister to his people. They value the prayers of others for the growth of this fellowship and for leaders to come from within the community.

### *Please Pray for the Knuckey Lagoon Community*

- \* for the people's hearts to be transformed by God*
- \*for Gideon Tasman to grow as a strong leader in the Church*
- \* for more men to become followers of Jesus and serve Him*



# WE CARE

**B**aptist Care NT's two major ministries – *Foodbank NT* and *Food for Life* – have been very busy over the past few months:



•**Foodbank NT** officially launched its School Breakfast Program in May. The launch took place at Moil Primary School, with the Territory Education Minister Peter Chandler in attendance. At this stage the pilot program provides nutritious breakfast free of charge to 17 schools across the Northern Territory, but hopes to expand this figure when more funding becomes available.

•New statistics from **Food For Life** show 3194 clients visited the food outlet in 2014, filling more than 32,000 bags of groceries. Food For Life expects to these figures to increase significantly for 2015, with weekly attendance now regularly reaching 80+ people.

•**Food For Life** continues to develop plans to purchase a bus which will be used as a mobile food outlet, and will travel between the Baptist churches in the greater Darwin region providing affordable food to struggling individuals and families.

•**Foodbank NT** is selling the next edition of the Entertainment Book. Anyone who would like a copy can pop into Foodbank NT or order online at [www.entertainmentbook.com.au/orderbooks/91197Z4](http://www.entertainmentbook.com.au/orderbooks/91197Z4). Remember \$11 from each sale goes straight back into Foodbank NT to support your local community.

**Kate Woods**  
*Roving Reporter*

## Food For Life at Casuarina Baptist Church

**W**hat God is doing in the Food for Life Ministry continues to amaze us every week. As we continue to thank God for the provision of our “daily bread,” He is providing so much more. We receive 60-80 people each week into the shop. People come from as far way as Batchelor to get their bags of food.

The steady provision of food from the Baptist Care FoodBank continues, and every week we seem to be blessed with what is needed. **Matt Maurer** is doing a great job as shop manager – constantly working to provide the best range and quantity of food possible as well as understanding the spiritual and servant nature of the ministry.

The cafe continues to be a huge success. Some people come just for the cafe alone- some even stay for the morning. It is a real buzz in there. Our prayer each week is that we will listen, that we will hear people and that opportunities will be given for God to speak into the lives of every individual who comes through the door.

Our volunteer workers have come from both CBC and Darwin Baptist. Their faithful service has been vital to the success of the ministry. We do need more volunteers. We especially need a new Team Leader. We have laughed heaps and cried a lot and been given many things to pray about. It is an awesome opportunity to open the doors of the church. What a privilege.



**Peter Kent**  
*Acting Team Leader*

*This is an abridged version of Peter's report to Assembly.*

**Urgent Prayer Needed**  
**Pray for vital government funding for**  
**Baptist Care Foodbank**  
**to continue this important ministry**

## ***Baptists Give Generously to Nepal Earthquake Victims***

**O**n Anzac Day this year Nepal suffered the first of two massive earthquakes that devastated large regions of the already struggling nation. The generosity of Australian supporters allowed **Baptist World Aid Australia** to be one of the first international agencies to respond to the crisis.

“We’ve been working with established Christian partners in Nepal now for more than 20 years so we have very good established networks across the country,” Dan Skehan, Disaster Management Specialist for Baptist World Aid, says. “These relationships have meant that after the first earthquake hit, we were able to immediately supply over 1,000 households with essential hygiene, shelter and food items to support their well being during this critical period in their lives.”

Dan Skehan was in Nepal visiting our Christian partners and assessing the longer term needs of communities in the affected regions when the second earthquake struck in mid May. “The ground shook violently. I was in an education meeting and people ran out of the buildings. It was frightening for me but even more terrifying for the Nepali people who have already experienced so much,” Dan Skehan continues. “The trauma in the communities, and especially in children, is obvious. Many Nepali people are wondering when this will all stop.

“While I was there I saw the shelter, food parcels and water purification tablets supplied by Australian donations being delivered - which was wonderful. “We are committed to Nepal for the long term - and we are committed to supporting Nepal through this latest emergency. On behalf of the many families and children we are able to help in Nepal, thank you!”

***Please continue to pray that God will comfort those who have lost loved ones, homes and livelihoods in Nepal. Pray also for our Christian partners delivering urgent supplies and for the people of Nepal.***



## **SANTOSH'S STORY**

**M**y name is Santosh and I am 70 years old. When the earthquake hit, I was in my house and we had to get out quickly. Luckily, from the earthquake my family suffered no physical harm but our house was badly damaged and now we cannot go in it. I am now very stressed, because I do not have a house that I can sleep in, that will keep my family safe and dry. All of our foods were being stored in the house and we cannot access them for fear of the house falling on us. We were storing rice and lentils mostly.

MCDS [Baptist World Aid Australia's Christian partner in Nepal] has helped my family by providing a tarpaulin that we now sleep under. We also received some food including rice and lentils which have been good so that I can feed my two grandchildren who live with me and my wife.



I am thankful for the tarpaulin because when it rains, my family can stay dry. I am worried about the monsoon though. It will bring lots of rain and wind. I hope that we can move to something a bit more permanent at least with tin roofing so that it can withstand the monsoon.

Until now I have no plans to rebuild my house. My children live far away and they are also impacted by the Earthquake. I am hoping that my sons can come and help me, but they are trying to rebuild their homes first.

***If you would like to help others like Santosh who have had their homes and lives torn apart by the recent earthquakes, please consider giving to Baptist World Aid Australia's Disaster Action Fund.***

***Call 1300 789 991 for details.***

# *Eternal Treasure - Earthly Vessels*

## *Territory Women 'Together' Again*

Once again, our annual Territory Women's Conference proved to be a wonderful event – a time full of encouragement, fellowship and growth. Women from 'across the Territory, across all Denominations and across all Ages' came together to celebrate this year's theme, ***Eternal Treasure ~ Earthly Vessels***.



The weekend started with a 'Women in Leadership' evening at Darwin Baptist Church. Women enjoyed supper under the stars before moving into the church to listen to guest speakers, Tracy Lilley and Jade Lewis.

Tracy – an author, pastor and life coach – shared strategies to help women find their passion and live lives aligned with their eternal purposes, while Jade – founder of the Yellow Ribbon Project for second chances in Australia – used the story of Elisha and the Widow's Oil (2 Kings 4:1-7) to remind women of the hope found in Jesus Christ.

The next day the conference continued in the Grand Ballroom at the DoubleTree by Hilton. Jade continued her story, sharing how Jesus helped her overcome a lifestyle of drugs, crime and violence and then used her story to inspire and help other women, most of whom are incarcerated.

Both Jade and Toni Rehrmann, director of Baptist Women NT, then encouraged women to let the treasure within them shine so it could impact God's Kingdom whenever He wanted, for whatever situation He desired.

Throughout the day, women bundled together relief packs to donate to the NAAJA Throughcare Program, a program that integrates Indigenous women back in to community after release from prison, as well as raising almost \$13,000 for Baptist World Aid's Vulnerable Children's Fund.

***Kate Woods***



***Music was a key component of the Conference***



***Jade Lewis spoke of the hope found in Jesus***

*Baptist Family at Assembly June, 2015*



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