

VISION FOR 2008 TAKES SHAPE

At the last Vision 100 Prayer Day for 2007, committee member Mikey Lynch spoke of how generosity fuels a movement while selfishness and greed smother it. In the book of Acts we see the early Christians giving freely of their homes, their money and their time for the sake of the gospel. When it comes to giving, Christians often have good intentions but we don't always follow through. Materialism and selfishness are increasingly acceptable in a society which encourages us to "look after number one." Even greed can be viewed as a virtue if it leads to success and prosperity. We must be careful to resist this worldly way of thinking and remember that everything we have is a gift from God. If we want Vision 100 to really take off, we must be prepared to give.

In 2008, Vision 100 will be seeking to raise more than \$100,000 in order to help fund three new and exciting ventures. We ask you to consider praying for, and giving to, any or all of the following causes:

1. Church Plant in Warrane: The need to plant a Church in the suburb of Warrane has been on Cornerstone's radar for a number of years. The elders of Cornerstone Church believe they have finally found the right man for the job. SMBC graduate Jim Mobbs and his wife Vivienne plan to move to Warrane in January next year.

"We really want this church plant to be built on new Christians, not transfers from other churches," says Cornerstone Minister David Jones. The plan is to hold off from starting a public meeting until there are a good number of converts. Instead, Jim is expected to begin by starting a couple of house churches in the area.

"There is a lot of excitement at Cornerstone for this proposal. We really feel that the Lord has led us to the right couple for the job. They are

already thinking about ways to connect with the local community," says David. All that remains is to provide Jim with a wage. Cornerstone has asked Vision 100 for financial support for three years, starting in 2008. Vision 100 has pledged \$30,000 per annum and Cornerstone will match this amount. "We need the prayers of the Vision 100 network, and are grateful for the financial support," says David Jones.

2. International Bible Ministry (IBM): IBM is run by the Fellowship of Christian University Students (FOCUS). The ministry is centred around a weekly Bible study and shared dinner and is dependent on volunteer leaders and cooks.

IBM has great potential, but needs help to reach it. The language and cultural barriers, and the extra support many students require as they settle into a foreign country, make the ministry very labour intensive. A full-time staff worker devoted to this work and to the needs of the students would be invaluable. Those involved in the ministry up until now are unanimous that employing a full-time worker to oversee IBM is crucial; they are also unanimous that Luke Hansard, the ministry's founder, is the man for the job.

Luke graduates from Moore College this year and has been working hard to raise a salary so that AFES can hire him as a staffworker. "IBM needs an overseer who can "eat, sleep and breathe" international ministry, says Luke, who is prepared to do exactly that. He envisions training nights, preaching, and two missions a year in addition to the weekly Bible study meeting. However, it's not just about events: "It's studying their culture, communicating our culture, helping them to communicate, taking them on field trips... It's looking after them when they get to their home countries, having home country

receivers, overseas conferences, international phone calls, emailed Bible studies every week...".

Offering this level of continued contact and support is virtually impossible at present – leaders struggle to fully support those in their midst, let alone those who have left. Luke plans to work with IBM under AFES for at least three years. Vision 100 has agreed to commit \$8,000 towards Luke's wage in the first year, \$5,000 in the second and \$3,000 in the third.

3. Roving Christian Worker for the Midlands: The Midlands was brought to the attention of the Vision 100 committee in 2007. Committee member Tony Holland shared concerns that the area is "starved of Christian input." "When my son lived in Oatlands there was virtually nothing for Christians," says Tony. "I think some kind of mobile worker to go into towns and rural communities and run Bible studies, men's fellowships etcetera would be a great start." Tony envisions the worker being based somewhere like Brighton and travelling almost daily.

"It is likely that this would have to be started cold turkey and would be real pioneering work. The choice of person would be essential as country folk do respond very differently to city slickers," says Tony. Vision 100 is hoping that enough money will be raised in 2008 to ensure that, should the right man for the job be found, a full-time wage would be ready and waiting. If \$60,000 were raised for the salary and associated costs, plus some additional money for travel expenses, the search for someone to fill the role could begin in earnest. If the right person was found sooner, when the target was only partially met, the committee would seek out individual Churches to join the project and help with the costs.

NEW SERVICE'S LAID BACK VIBE HITS THE SPOT

Crossroads began as a church which predominantly consisted of, and catered for, university students. This is no longer the case. Most of the original students have since graduated; many have married and had children. Crossroads is invariably looking more and more like a family church.

Family-friendly is not necessarily student-friendly, and so began a new 8pm Monday night meeting earlier this year. John Bowerman, an engineering student who has joined the group, tells us how he has been finding it.

"Everyone came across as being friendly and "normal" which was reassuring."

What were your first impressions of the Monday meeting? It was very relaxed and casual. Mikey was entertaining and funny and not at all like I had imagined a preacher would be like. Mikey's engaging manner is good; I'm sure if some of my lecturers adopted his kind of public speaking technique I'd remain a little more awake during class. The first talk was on Genesis chapter 1 and, as someone who had never read any of the Old Testament before, I found it easy to follow and interesting. As someone who places a lot of stock in science, I was impressed at the amount of semi-

scientific answers that were supported not contradicted by what was being said. Everyone came across as being friendly and "normal" which was reassuring.

How did it compare to your expectations of Church? I was forced Catholicism by my mother when I was young. The memories I have are that church was incredibly boring and full of stupid rituals; I absorbed almost none of what was being said. In saying that, I still believed strongly in a Christian God and thought church would be a good idea if I could find one that suited me. So after that sort of church upbringing, the Monday night session was nothing like what I expected. There was no kneeling or holy communion; and I think the fact that I took myself along rather than being dragged kicking and screaming behind my mum helped in that I listened and thought about the things that were discussed and felt as though I had taken something out of the session. Plus it was a nice social gathering and I met a lot of interesting people. So I guess the whole thing was surprising, but in a good way, a pleasant surprise.

What made you come again? I enjoyed the first session and am interested in finding out more about the Bible and Christianity.

You later attended a regular Sunday meeting. How did it compare with the Monday night one? Well the one I went to was one of a three part series on evangelism which wasn't a huge help to someone who had just started looking at Christianity. I didn't take as much out of this one as I do from the Mondays, which I put down to the topic covered. This is one of the better things about Monday for me: that it is aimed at the start [starting at the beginning of the Bible, not presupposing existing knowledge of Christianity]. There were more parallels between the Sunday service and what I remember from childhood, like the singing and collection, stuff like that, which I didn't find too bad (the words on the projector help and the hymns were a bit more modern than the ones I remember).

In which service did you feel more comfortable and why? I wouldn't say I felt uncomfortable in either service, but I think the smaller gathering and more laid back vibe of the Monday night makes it more comfortable.

What is the most significant thing (if any) you've learned about Christianity? I guess just that there is a God, it makes sense that there is a God and that he died for our sins and we need to be grateful and acknowledge that.

FAREWELL TO VISION 100 COMMITTEE MEMBER TONY HOLLAND

1. So we're bidding you farewell. What's next for the Hollands? The Holland's are moving to the Canberra area so that we can be closer to our 3 adult children who live on the big Island. We have purchased a 10 acre property just outside the ACT and one of our sons will be buying a share of the property with us to run his trucking business from. All very exciting, but very sad to be leaving Tassie as well. I will be working as the Business Manager in a Christian school in Canberra.

2. Why did you join the Vision 100 committee? As an accountant, it seemed a very worthwhile activity to be able to use my skills and to save the committee from having to employ a bookkeeper. Also Brian Vaatstra asked me to.

3. What insights into Vision 100 have you gained since being on the committee? This is a great initiative and given good leadership and the vision I see many more church plants popping up all over the state. Win, train send, what a great model to follow. When you always look

outwards to grow it is hard to navel gaze, a real trap in some churches.

4. What are some of the dreams you have for Vision 100's immediate future? One real area of passion for me is to meet the spiritual needs of rural communities. I grew up and have lived in numerous remote rural communities and it is hard without strong Christian fellowship and more importantly good teaching. I think that areas like the Midlands present fantastic opportunities for Gospel planting. Traditional single church models will not work here, but a roving itinerant pastor/teacher type person who was well supported could be a real winner. I do hope that 2009 may see such a position established.

5. What is your prayer for Vision 100? That the work will continue. That more churches will be planted and most importantly that many lives will be won for Christ. One final prayer is that a person will be raised up to take my place as Treasurer.

CHURCH PLANTING PRINCIPLES

Vision 100 seeks to encourage churches everywhere to be engaged in church planting. We do this not for the sake of planting churches, but for the sake of the gospel and the glory of Christ our Saviour. Our church planting endeavours must be motivated and driven by the gospel - to see the good news of Jesus spread throughout the world. What then are some of the principles that govern this exciting work?

Firstly, and most obviously, we must keep a gospel focus in our church planting work. The gospel tells me I am saved by grace alone. If there is a hint of legalism (I am making a contribution to my salvation) or licence (it doesn't matter how I live because I am saved by grace) you lose the power of the gospel and the heart of the church planting work is damaged. Salvation by grace, on the other hand, informs me that I am completely obligated and motivated to serve Christ, energising me for the work.

"...we need to redefine our ideas of success. The gospel does not lead us into a comfortable, trouble-free life, but rather a life sacrificed to the cause of Christ... It's not about numbers... It's not about building mega churches..."

a comfortable, trouble-free life, but rather a life sacrificed to the cause of Christ (2 Corinthians 6). It is not defined by prosperity, but gospel generosity (2 Corinthians 9). It's not about numbers, but about spreading the Word of God as widely as possible and leaving the results to God (Matthew 13; 2 Timothy 4:2). It's not about building mega-churches, it's about multiplying churches everywhere to enable the Word to be spread everywhere. It's not about short-term success, it's about building the Kingdom for the long-term future. In light of all this, we step out in faith and are prepared to risk all for the sake of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, to plant churches we need to be gospel generous. In order to plant, churches need to be prepared to give away their best leaders, members and givers to new work. This is what we see the church in Corinth do in sending Paul and Barnabas to assist the church in Judea (Acts 11:29-30) and to plant churches across Asia Minor (Acts 13:2-3). In the church plant, people are focused on reaching non-Christians, and will need to practice more hospitality and give more time, money and energy to the task. Living our lives for Christ and under his rule is at the heart of such gospel generosity.

Fourthly, church-planting requires that we raise up and develop gospel-hearted leaders. Such leaders will be characterised by the following: (1) They will have the goal to see people saved to the glory of God (2 Timothy 2:10). (2) They will employ the ministry of the Word and prayer

as the two vital elements of gospel work (2 Timothy 4:2-3; Colossians 4:2). (3) Their lifestyles will be self-controlled, blameless, full of faith, holding to truth, honesty (especially with money), gentleness, a good reputation, able to teach, servant hearted (1 Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:6-9; Mark 10:35-45). (4) They will be willing to count the cost and sacrifice to build the kingdom of God through hard work, perseverance, obedience, discipline, patience and boldness (Matthew 16:24; 2 Timothy 2:1-7). (5) They will have a love for people, demonstrating this in being caring, selfless, hospitable, nurturing, encouraging, confronting, comforting (1 Thessalonians 2:1-12).

Fifthly, effective church plants are prepared to deal with obstacles to the gospel work. There is a keen awareness that church planting is about engaging in a spiritual battle, and that Satan will try to damage the unity and effectiveness of the work. We must be prepared to deal with any obstacles he places in our way. Our own folly can also be an obstacle. The people involved in the church plant may become self-reliant and neglect prayer. On the other hand, they may hold onto traditions and structures that hinder the gospel. They may even lose confidence in the gospel itself as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe, and turn to worldly technique. All these obstacles will need to be identified and dealt with if the church plant is to be healthy.

Finally, those involved in church planting will set their hearts on the gospel goal - the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31-11:1). This, not success or numbers, is what motivates the work of church planting.

Brian Vaatstra

MEET THE MOBBS



Hi. Our names are Jim and Vivienne Mobbs, and we are looking forward to getting out of Sydney and moving to beautiful Tassie to work at Cornerstone. We are excited to see what God will do with the upcoming church plant at Warrane.

Jim is finishing college (SMBC) in November, and Vivienne is a legal secretary. Jim enjoys real football (rugby league, not AFL!), cooking and motor bikes. He also does stand up comedy on the odd occasion. Vivienne enjoys good coffee, watching movies and eating chocolate.

We are grateful for the opportunity to come. We hope that we will be humble learners and will have the privilege of seeing God working in powerful ways. We have been praying that God will lead many souls to Christ, and that we will be an encouragement for each other.

We are pleased that we are moving down in the summer so we can ease into the cooler weather! See you soon...

NEW LIFE AND A NEW FAMILY AT BAY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

LYNNE'S STORY I have always believed in Jesus and that He died for me. I was baptised at the age of six. My parents weren't Christians, but saw to it that my two brothers and I went to Sunday School. In my teenage years I belonged to the Methodist Youth Fellowship, which I thoroughly enjoyed. I was married at age 18 and at twenty, had my first child.

Through working and raising a child I didn't have time for Christ in my life, though I did send my son to church with my sister-in-law. After I had my second child I started going back to church some, but felt very uncomfortable there. I felt I needed something more. My daughter was born after my divorce from my first husband. My eldest son was fourteen and second son was seven. I was then raising three children on my own.

I felt I wasn't worthy of the Lord and therefore was being punished. After all, I was abused during my marriage and sexually abused by my father from age ten to eighteen. I thought I was at fault for this abuse. God must have hated me.

I studied with the Jehovah's Witnesses for two years. Well, that wasn't right for me either.

After another marriage and more abuse, I met my husband David in an online group called "Talking Clean." After a few months he came to America (Michigan) to visit me for a month. We knew it was love before he came to me. Four months after that he flew back to Michigan, packed me up, and married me. He took me away from three jobs and a terrible depression problem. I left behind three children and now there are seven grandchildren. We know God is responsible for our finding one another.

After being here a little over two years, I asked Hetty Albion to please invite me to church as she talked so much about her 'church family'. I started studying with Hetty and then went to the Introducing God course. I found Christ for real this time and am never going to ignore or push him away again.

Bay taught me so much. I have so many Christian friends – 'family' – now. David and I both are so happy being involved in Bay, in our small groups, and in the Sunday meetings also. Through all of these and reading the Bible, I have learned so much.

Jesus died on the cross for me and chose me to help carry on his teachings and also to never stop learning and spreading love.

DAVID'S STORY I have gone to church and looked at different religions over my life. But at those times I can say I was not a Christian, I didn't have a commitment! In fact I ended up denying Christ and became agnostic. I think this was mainly through the pressures and 'fire and brimstone' teachings of those religions.

When I first came into contact with Bay Church it was at a Christmas concert on the beach. I went with my defenses up, not really wanting to be there. I suppose I went along to please those who asked us. I did enjoy it; I liked the music and no one preached to me.

Life went on, I was happy doing my own thing. Lynn started going to church at Bay, I would drop her off and pick her up. I met a few of the people there, but kept my defenses up.

Lynn started the Introducing God course and on about the 4th week I asked her and Hetty if I might come along. I don't know what prompted me, but I felt the need to go. I really enjoyed the course, the relaxed atmosphere and the format of food, questions and discussion.

I really started to enjoy going to church. I loved the relaxed atmosphere, dressing casual, coffee, talking over lunch. It was not like any church I had been to. And the big thing that impressed me was that it was about being a Christian, not religion. I really enjoy Bay Church, its friendliness, the music, the people; you can feel the Spirit at the meetings.

I have grown in my conviction of Christ. It has been a gradual process. My commitment of faith in Him as Saviour and Lord has been a highlight. I am getting there. I must admit that in the early days I was still struggling at times.

It wasn't until the second Introducing God course, which I attended with my daughter Jesse that I really felt the closeness of Christ. I was sitting at the table listening to Dominic Steele talk about Jesus and the salvation he brings, when a sudden calm and peace came over me, I felt the Spirit, and I knew I had made the right decision to follow Christ.

Bay Church is a great thriving community with an enthusiastic younger set whom are great to be around. You can feel that Christ dwells in our midst.

I know that Jesus is the Christ, that God lives. This is my testimony.

CONTACT VISION 100 We welcome your input. Please contact us if you have any questions, suggestions or feedback, if you would like to receive this newsletter by post or email, or if your contact details have changed. Please be sure to include a return address. If you wish to donate money to Vision 100, you can make a direct deposit to: Vision 100 Resources, National Australia Bank, BSB 087-007 54-875-7295. If you would like your donation to go towards a particular cause (Warrane, IBM, Midlands), please specify. If for any reason your donation is not required for the cause of your choice, please be assured it will be put to good use elsewhere. If you or your church would like to run a fundraising event for Vision100, please email Emma on emmahwilkins@gmail.com

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