



together in **mission**

KING OF KINGS
Messiah
Only Begotten
Counsellor
SON OF GOD
JESUS CHRIST
Savior
Lord of Lords
Wonderful
MIGHTY
Holy One
Everlasting
Prince of Peace
Jehovah
Redeemer

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Minister

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Mike Mills,
State Executive Minister

Don't lose sight of the central focus

As we approach Christmas and the entire commercial world around us craves our attention it's important we don't lose sight of the central focus of this season – the incarnation! That is just a fancy theological term for the coming of Jesus to live amongst us, in our world. Eugene Peterson, in his paraphrase *The Message*, puts it like this:

*The Word was first,
the Word present to God
God present to the Word.
The Word was God, ...
The Word became flesh and blood,
and moved into the neighbourhood.*
(John 1: 1, 14)

Sure, at Christmas we celebrate the birth of the Word in the human form of Jesus, but it is not a sentimental celebration. In this season we mark an historical event which has eternal ramifications for humanity, for creation, for you and for me. God, as Jesus the man *moved into the neighbourhood*. Other

translations express it as “dwelt” or “made His dwelling among us”. The tendency is that we see this as having just been for a season, for the 30+ years of Jesus’ human life. What might it mean for us to be more attentive to His ongoing presence and life in our neighbourhoods and amongst us? How might this change the nature of our communities of faith as we do life together with one another and with Jesus? How does this kind of attentiveness change how we view what is going on in the life of our streets, suburbs and cities?

After all, this is what the Word becoming flesh and blood, is all about. As the apostle Paul tells us, it is through Jesus that God is “reconciling to Himself all things” (Colossians 1:20).

So as we, the team here at Unley, wish you all a blessed Christmas, so too we pray that each of us will be renewed in our wonder of God who has moved into our neighbourhood!

Inspiring stories and defining moments at assembly

On 19 November delegates from churches gathered at Seaton Baptist Church for the Annual Assembly. The team from Seaton Baptist led us in worship, delegates reflected on the President's message, (see page 3) prayed and made ministry decisions.

INSPIRING STORIES

We listened to inspiring stories from churches and ministries including audiovisual presentations.

Pastor Alois Schneider shared that in 2018 Seaton Baptist will celebrate its 100th year of witness in the Seaton area, acknowledging that this bears witness not only to God's faithfulness but also to the people who have been faithful to God through the years.

Luke Hutchinson, SA Director Global Interaction, shared that two SA couples have been accepted as candidates for cross-cultural mission.

Andrew Turner shared the story of the revitalization of West Beach and some of the ways in which they as a church are re-engaging with their neighbourhood.

Patrick Garton shared details of a exciting missional opportunity called Northern Gold in which pastors from northern churches are collaborating together to plant churches in northern region of Adelaide.

Delegates then gathered in twos and threes to pray for whatever aspects of these ministries and the Baptist life in South Australia they felt led to.

FELLOWSHIP

Morning tea provided an opportunity to catch up with familiar friends and meet new ones.

GENERAL BUSINESS

The general business included the declaration of the election of James Whalland, Daniel Gardiner and Gayor Johnson to Assembly Board and Frances Hardy to the Baptist Care (SA) Board.

Assembly resolutions

- the current President's tenure was extended for a period of one year.
- the following were accepted for Accreditation/Ordination
Dale Green, Julie Gardiner, David Chambers (Pastor-Leaders), Craig Millowick (Church Planter) and Reuben Salagaras (Chaplaincy)
- Rev Mike Mills was reappointed as State Executive Minister for a further 4 years

Baptist Care (SA) AGM

The multifaceted ministry of Baptist Care (SA) was featured in a report by its Chief Executive Officer, Paul Scully, as part of the process of receiving and adopting Annual and Financial reports.



Photo above (from left) Jason Hoet (President), praying for those accepted for Accreditation/Ordination, David Chambers, Dale Green, Craig Millowick. Inset photos, Julie Gardiner and Reuben Salagaras



Jason Hoet,
President

Do people thank God for our churches

President's message to the Annual Assembly of Baptist Churches of South Australia | 19 November 2016

Psalm 122:6-9

"May those who love you be secure.

May there be peace within your walls and security within your citadels."

For the sake of my family and friends, I will say, "Peace be within you."

For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek your prosperity.



Hills of Jerusalem
Photo by Gaynor Johnson

'I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord." A verse like this could make for a great catch cry to call us to the joy of gathering with God's people each Sunday. Many each week are glad to attend Church. McCrindle research observes that twice as many Australians attend church at least once per month (3.495m) as attend during the football season all AFL, NRL, A League and Super Rugby games combined per month (1.684m).

This writer of Psalm 122 is excited to be on pilgrimage to "the house of the LORD", the Temple located in the heart of Jerusalem. Through the first few verses we see pilgrims full of wonder at the scale, the place, the history, the importance of their city Jerusalem. The Psalm concludes with a powerful insight in verse 9 "For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek your prosperity." The Temple these pilgrims love is in the city they love. When the city thrives, the temple thrives. When the temple thrives, the city thrives! Tragically history illustrates when the Temple and city did not do well. By 587BC the Kings had lost their way in faith and as just rulers, the temple and priests had lost their way with corrupt faith. Both were torn down by the Babylonians, the city's people killed and elite carried off as prisoners.

Christianity has had a mixed relationship with cities and society. Jesus loved Jerusalem and it was the place where he was crucified. Rome was the centre of power which promoted the persecution of Christians but by 312 AD, the future of the Empire became enmeshed with the church. At times the church has been on the 'outside' of society for the sake of justice or even its own survival. At times the church has sought to conquer society with the imposition of its values and beliefs. Baptists have had an uneasy dance with cities and society. For the sake of authentic faith, we promoted separation of church and state. But we have a great insight from Ps 122. The Churches we love are in the cities we love. It is in the best interest of the Church and the City that both do well. When our nation prospers, our state or communities, families or schools, it is good for everyone. It is good for churches and Christians. Ask the Christians in Syria what life is like when social order collapses, everyone is hurt.

When the Church thrives it is good for society. A government report from the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission recognises this: "Faith-based charities make an enormous and arguably under-recognised contribution to Australia's social infrastructure and social well-being. They are by far the largest single category of charity in Australia". While this is clearly not just the Christian church - it does speak to the enormous good the 13000 Christian churches and their agencies bring to our society.

As followers of Jesus, isolating ourselves from our cities and societies is not an option as this is not the way God in Christ Jesus has met our world. The Easter account regarding Jesus reminds us God is amazing in His love towards us. Loving us, even when we are unlovely. Forgiving us when we are unforgivable. Ultimately Jesus' death on a cross is our best reminder of the length God goes in His love. God holds nothing back. In Jesus, through the cross and the power of the resurrection, God in love binds Himself to us. If we love our cities and her peoples we are to do the same. In love serve those we love, work for their good, pray for their good. Tim Keller believes Christians should be among the very best citizens because we enter society with an intact identity in God. We are secure enough to be sacrificially generous, we are free to serve, we seek no glory nor profit - because our lives are found in Christ.

The test for me on the health of our churches is, "Do people thank God for our Churches?" Are our neighbours glad we are part of their lives, neighbourhood, part of their city? We can be prophets to our society, calling out injustice, realigning crooked thinking, addressing error. Can we 'pastor' our society through our care, love and labour? Will people heed us if they don't feel we are for them? How can we demonstrate their concerns are our concerns, their hopes our hopes? It is my observation many in our state are doing it tough, economically, socially, psychologically, spiritually. Through God's people, our Baptist Churches and Baptist Care SA, can we labour for their peace, prosperity and our common good?

news from our **Churches**

Hand made with Love Care & Share at Trinity connecting...

What an opportunity, I thought while reading the article on the Baby Bundle Ministry in the April 2016 edition of Together in Mission. Not only was it a lovely story about helping disadvantaged families, it also provided an opportunity to connect and contribute to such a worthwhile ministry. Let me tell you what happened.....

Care and Share at Trinity is a social support/ activity program for people 65 years and over who live in the south/east metropolitan area (refer October edition of Together in Mission). Knowing that many of our ladies who attend on Wednesdays are avid knitters, I suggested that they might like to make a contribution to the Baby Bundle Ministry. I contacted Hazel Selby who organises the bundles and she told me how Care and Share at Trinity could make a contribution.

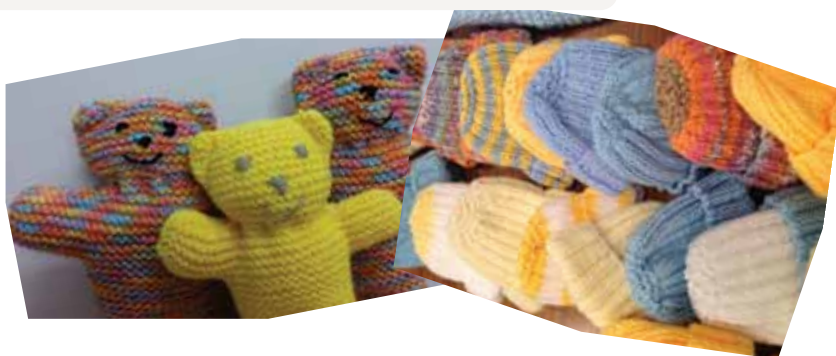
Well.....ours ladies never looked back, off they went. Each week they would bring in something new, it really was show and tell over their morning tea!. You name it, they knitted it.....beanies, bears, blankets, booties, cardigans, toys and even more beanies (Kosara is our beanie specialist now).

I invited Hazel Selby to meet the ladies and hand over all our made with love produce. She was delighted to receive such a contribution to the Baby Bundle Ministry.

Thank you to Together in Mission staff and contributors who make this magazine happen. It is a great source of information about what is happening within the Baptist Churches. It provides a point of connectivity where people with the desire and skills can collaborate and make a significant community contribution.

Janine Callegari
Program Manager
[www.trinityclg.org.au/
care-and-share](http://www.trinityclg.org.au/care-and-share)

Photo: from left: Audrey Rice, Hazel Selby, Val Lord, Ruth Hoyle & Margaret Exell. Other contributors who were not available at the meeting include: Thelma Crane, Kosara Saponjic, Gwen Hillman & Frances Earle



Flinders Street Baptist **International Ministry**

People from all around the world (many from China) attend the English classes held at Flinders Street Baptist over 4 days each week, as they have done for many years. The program is looking in 2017 to supplement volunteers from the church, particularly for the late afternoon class on Mondays, but daytime opportunities also exist from time to time.

Initial enquiries can be made to Torrey Wilson, Associate Minister on 0410 148 944 or twilson@fsbc.asn.au



Some English students assembling outside Flinders Street Baptist Church.

Baptist 40+ Singles

first dinner for 2017

Saturday 21 January, 6.30 pm

Caffé Primo

207 The Esplanade (corner South Street)
Henley Beach

then a walk along the beach/jetty

Cost: reasonable

RSVP by 17 January 2017
Helen & Brian, 8341 8283
(in emergency only 0411 772 475)

All welcome to join us

2017

Bringing community back to our streets

We're flooded with modern technologies such as mobiles, facebook, twitter etc. which are designed to make communicating with each other quick and easy. Yet research shows we're more disconnected from each other than ever before.

Our culture values "hard work, success and wealth", so we often neglect to make time for social connections¹. This is bad news, as we now know that social connectedness is one of the greatest predictors of health and happiness. No surprises then that it's also something Jesus commanded us to promote!

So how do we live out community ministry in our own neighbourhoods? This is the question that Baptist Care's Senior Consultant in Church & Community Development, Reverend Joanna Hubbard, asked at her workshop at the recent 4D conference.

Flick and Glenn Pederick know a bit about it. As part of the Soul Food Christian Community, they run the Soul Food Café six days a week. They live just around the corner from the café, so it's been a great avenue for them to get to know the people of their neighbourhood. Each Sunday night they host a special session called *The Table*, where people from all walks of life are invited to come along, bring some food and share their lives together over a meal. *The Table* has been especially attractive to locals who find it difficult or intimidating to come along to church.

Like the Pedericks, Steve and Jeanette Noolan also began intentionally reaching out to the people in their local community. Their ministry grew from simple kindnesses to the person delivering junk mail, or the elderly



person living alone – to opening their home to their neighbours for shared meals every week. Most people are fiercely protective of their time and space within their home, but the Noolans have consciously and willingly opened theirs up to others.

In Adelaide's western suburbs, a Collective Action Group has also looked at how they could help neighbours get to know each other. Comprised of community service providers and the Richmond Baptist Church, they've organised several family friendly events which have drawn large crowds and included fun

activities and challenges for people to 'take on' together.

Workshop attendees were encouraged to identify *why* these ministries were all working so well. Interestingly, they were all local, intentional,

opportunistic, responsive and simple. But more than that, the people of the community were *active contributors* – rather than passive 'receivers'.

And perhaps most telling of all, people noticed that community ministry needs to happen at all levels – individual to individual, community leaders to church leaders, and between those on the margins of both – to be truly sustainable and effective. The final conclusion? **"You won't do community ministry if you're trying to fit it in as an extra thing, you need to live your life with others included."**

The challenge remains for us to live our lives *actively caring* for our neighbours...and breathe community ministry back into our local streets.

Photo Community ministry needs to happen at all levels

¹ Social Ties are good for your health, BeWell @ Stanford: Stanford University <http://bewell.stanford.edu/features/social-ties-good-health>

Sacred Agents

Learning Greek learnt me to learn

I'm clearly no scholar, but many moons ago at Bible College they tried to teach me New Testament Greek. Twice. I haven't retained a whole lot – apart from being an alpha male who enjoys a good pi. Still, one little thing my teacher mentioned has really stuck with me.

There's a lot of vocabulary to learn of course, so we made hundreds of little flash cards to go through every day, with the Greek on one side and English on the other. "Here's a trick," my teacher said. "When you get a card right, put it in a pile to your left. When you get a card wrong, put it in a pile on your right. When you finish, leave the left pile, but pick up the other one and go through them all again, with the same method. Keep going until they're all on your left."

OK so perhaps that's not revolutionary. But my teacher pointed out that we humans have a penchant for going over and over the things we already know (because that feels good), and avoiding the things we don't know (because they make us feel inadequate). So many students waste precious swat-vac time revising over and over things they already know. By disciplining yourself to focus on what you *don't*, you can learn a lot and very quickly. Did I take it to heart? All I'll say is don't take me on at Trivial Pursuit Genus I edition.

But it makes me wonder how we go about learning to be sacred agents. "Come follow me," says Jesus, "And I will make you fishers for people." The good news is that the Lord will teach us. The question is: Are we really wanting to learn?

When I hear Christians talking about what it means to be on mission, I hear us rehearse again and again – and again – and again the things we already know. We conspire to keep the conversation in a safe place. But what if we pressed into the things we *don't* know and *aren't* being effective in? What if one agent could say to another "I just don't know how to..." or "I'm just getting nowhere with..."? What if our collective prayer was "Lord, forgive our slowness, but please, please, teach us to represent yYou to our neighbours in a way that really matters. We're obviously missing something, probably plenty. Open our hearts and minds and eyes and ears and would You go over it with us one more time?"

Andrew Turner is our Church Development Facilitator. You can interact with this and other articles on his blog www.sacredagents.net

together in mission
On mission

Getting ready and set to go!

As a part of the Australian Baptist family, Global Interaction identifies, trains, resources and sends people overseas. Why? For one important reason: To share the Good News of Jesus Christ with people in different cultural contexts. As it turns out, there has been a lot happening in South Australia this past year!



After two years of study, training and partnership development, Rob and Deb Griffith (Village Church – Blackwood Hills Baptist), will be heading off to Cambodia in the early stages of next year. Please pray for them as they make final arrangements and prepare for a radical change of life. Please also pray for the Khmer people of Cambodia, that God would be preparing the hearts and minds of many to begin following Jesus together in community.

While we can't (yet) let you know who they are, we also have two other South Australian couples (one with 3 young children), soon to set out on partnership development. Just as Rob and Deb have done, they will be seeking to identify those people and churches that God is asking to partner with them, as they prepare to head overseas sometime in the next few years. Please be praying for these people, and consider what it might look like for yourself or your church to partner with them in God's mission.



On behalf of the Global Interaction team here in SA, and nationally, thank you to you all for your interest, support and especially prayers, throughout 2016. May you know God's peace and blessings through the Christmas season, and into 2017.

Luke Hutchinson
State Director – Global Interaction SA/NT



Ekteino challenge!

As a follower of Jesus, we want to stretch out - to impact our world and the people around us, for good.

But how? Where do we begin?

This Spring, take Global Interaction's Ekteino challenge!

Over 4 weeks, we will discover more about God, His plans and how we can partner with Him in our world through intentional action and reflection.

Download the App from your favourite App store

Invite others to join

And make space each weekday for one month to explore God's call on your life.

Ekteino: stretching our faith in the everyday.

Brought to you by Global Interaction and Baptist Financial Services



#Ekteino

#Ekteinochallenge

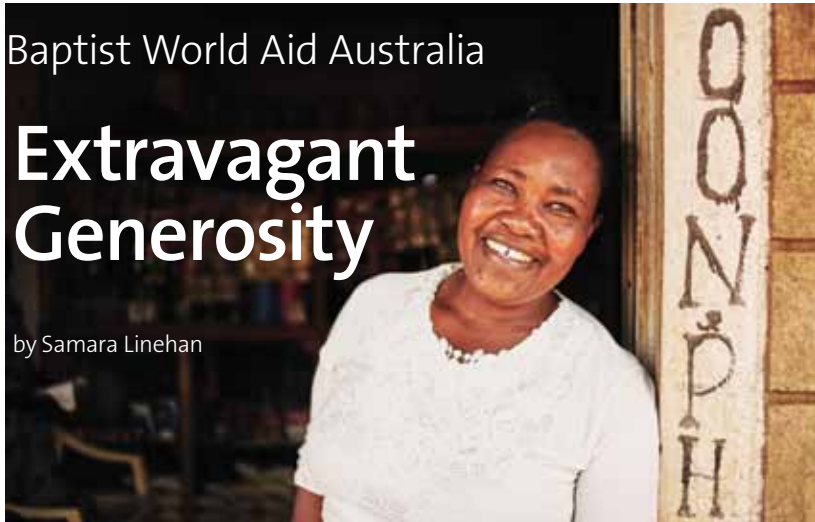
www.globalinteraction.org.au/Ekteino

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwtAXv5WPUo>

Baptist World Aid Australia

Extravagant Generosity

by Samara Linehan



The Kamba tribe has a saying: “share a bird together”. When I met Josephine earlier this year while visiting some of our projects in the Kitui County in Kenya, I experienced this incredible saying for myself.

The birds that the Kamba tribe regularly eat are small, but the Kamba culture encourages its people to share what they have with one another, regardless of the amount or size.

At its heart, the act of sharing a bird (or a meal) with a visitor is all about generosity. And the Kamba tribe believe that by sharing what is available with a visitor to your home, you are blessing them generously.

For many years, Josephine and her husband struggled to put food on the table. Josephine is a farmer and mum of six children. Her husband, when he's lucky enough to find work, is employed as a casual labourer, in a city far away from home. Try as they might, there was just never enough money to make ends meet. Rains in Kenya are infrequent and this often meant that it was difficult for Josephine to grow enough food to feed her six children. “The dry period begins from June to October, which is the period of famine,” Josephine explains. “It actually happens yearly because the rains have always been below (what is needed) for us to harvest enough food for a whole year.”

Can you imagine what it must be like? To toil day after day on your land knowing that, no matter how hard you work, it will never be enough?

This is what life was like for Josephine, until our Christian partner, Anglican Development Services Eastern, began working in her community. Our Christian partner gave her farming training and taught her to plant drought resistant crops on terraces to conserve soil and increase irrigation. These simple techniques helped her to multiply her crop yield 18 times!

In just four short years, with the support of Australians like you, Josephine has completely transformed life for her family. She is harvesting more food than ever, she

has received training in animal care and now receives a small payment to look after the cows in her neighbourhood, and she has started a small shop in her village. Hers is a wonderful story of strength, determination, and transformation... but it was Josephine's generosity that moved me most.

Before I sat down to share the customary “bird” with Josephine (in this case a delicious spread of mangoes, maize and bottled water from her shop) she paused to say grace... and it brought me undone.

What she prayed that day was a genuine prayer of thanks. And, as I listened, I understood that she meant it with all her heart. In that instant, Josephine's experience of poverty became a brutal reality in my mind. There had been times in her life when food was scarce. She'd lived through disaster and through famine... and regularly faced the heartbreak of having to send her children to bed with empty stomachs.

And yet, instead of storing her food away for the next hungry season, Josephine, who has so very little herself, chose to share the best of that little with me... a stranger whom she'd only just met.

I later asked Josephine what it was that motivated her to be so generous. “It is good to be generous because all things are provided by God,” she said. “He wants them shared with our neighbours and friends (so we can) celebrate with them the little we have since God is our provider. “The Bible says the hand that gives is blessed.” What extravagant generosity!

This Christmas, Baptist World Aid is celebrating the extravagant generosity of our God... who loves us so much that He gave us a Saviour we did not deserve.

Can I encourage you, as Josephine encouraged me, to reflect God's generosity? Share your blessing this Christmas with the families who live in the world's poorest homes. Give to the Baptist World Aid Christmas Appeal today and help families like Josephine's to transform their lives. Go to: baptistworldaid.org.au/christmas-appeal.

For prayer...

12-21 December

*GIA: Cate is on home assignment. Pray for the whole family as they spend time with their mother who has alzheimer's.

*Pray for Mylor camping staff.

*GIA: Thank God that our prayers enabled Dema and Carolyn to be issued with new visas through the school where they are now teaching.

*Pray for our special Christmas programs and our pastors as they prepare for Christmas services.

22-31 December

*22 West Beach: Pray for God's guidance and blessing on our Children's Christmas Holiday program this afternoon, then a BBQ and carols to which parents and the whole church family are invited.

*GIA: Heather (General Director) and David Bird (Board Vice Chairperson) appreciate our prayers.

*Pray for a restful break for youth and young adult pastors across the state.

*Pray that families will connect in a deep way over the holidays.

*29/12-2/1 Senior CE Camp at Cornerstone College, Mount Barker – pray for all there.

1-10 January 2017

*GIA: Praise God that Simeon is managing going to the learning centre by himself very well.

*4-8 Pray for leaders and campers at the Junior CE Camp at Mount Barker.

*Pray for Mike Mills and Staff, Andrew Turner (Church Development Facilitator), Melinda Cousins (Accreditation Facilitator), Mike Stevens (Youth & Young Adults Facilitator), Elliot Keane (Evangelism Equipper) and Darryl Bishop (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse {CALD} Ministry Facilitator).

*Dr Mills seeks prayer for his wife, Karina, and her helpers at the school at Kompam – from kindly to high school!

11-17 January

*Pray for the Baptist Care Board.

*GIA: We welcome new candidates, Marc, Rachel and their three children. Pray as they decide where to serve.

*Pray for time for youth workers to connect with young people.

18-25 January

*Hoa seeks prayer for the homeless shelter – for sufficient finance and building teams.

*Pray for the President, Jason Hoet.

*Pray for Baptist Care Australia as they seek a new Executive Director.

26-31 January

*Pray for children under the care of Baptist Care.

*GIA: Pray for Rob and Deb as they prepare to begin life soon in Cambodia among the Khmer people.

*Pray for revival.

1-12 February

*Thank God for all those baptized last year and pray for those considering taking this great step.

*6 Pray for the Assembly Board and its Committees meeting today.

*Pray for our young people who are beginning studies at high school and university.

Baptisms

Follow me...

Blackwood Hills | Village Church,
Melrose

Sunday 30 October

Ae Jae Ryangy baptised by Adam Wood

Port Pirie Baptist

Sunday 23 October

Craig Sinclair and Dylan Knight



Rostrevor Baptist

Sunday 23 October

from left: **Amelia** (grey jacket holding white paper), **Ben** (centre blue white checked shirt sleeve shirt), **Declan** (black shorts white paper, white / red / grey t shirt)



6 November

from left: **Raj , Lily , Donna**



The Ministry Team and staff of the Baptist Churches of SA extend to all our readers the compliments of the Season and prayers for the coming year.

Office closure - the Baptist Centre will be closed from 12 noon Friday 23 December 2016 and will re-open 9.00 am Tuesday 3 January 2017.



Christmas Gifts
for homeless children
0 - 15 years



Baptist Care

Drop off your gift (unwrapped) to:

WestCare Centre
11-19 Millers Court, Adelaide SA 5000

before Wednesday 7 December



www.baptistcaresa.org.au

Please send your donations to:

Fundraising Team
Level 2, Baptist Care House
130 Rose Terrace, Wayville SA 5034
T: 08 8273 7106

Financial donations are tax deductible and will buy toys and gifts.

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Baptist Churches of South Australia Inc
35-39 King William Road, Unley South Australia 5061
Telephone: (08) 8357 1755
Facsimile: (08) 8373 8000
Web: www.sabaptist.asn.au

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Mailing Address

together in mission
Baptist Churches of South Australia,
PO Box 432, Unley SA 5061
e-mail: info@sabaptist.asn.au

Deadlines

February edition - 13 January 2017

CLASSIFIEDS

RENTAL OFFICE SPACE

Office space to rent is available in Flinders House at Flinders Street Baptist Church. Contact Administrator, Christine de Bruyn on 8223 4550 for more information

LONDON B&B

In lovely home, self-catering facilities, spacious rooms, easy city access, reasonable rates. Email: rachelallen1234@gmail.com
Telephone: 0011 44 2086946538

