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In the current political climate, it is tempting to think that the Christian influence and cause is waning. There is no denying the pressures faced by Christians in the workplace and in public life. Yet there is no reason to despair. God remains in control, the Bible has robust answers to life's questions and the Spirit is at work opening the hearts of our fellow Australians to the good news of Jesus. We hope you are encouraged to give thanks to our heavenly Father for this short selection of stories from 2017.

Staff news



Al Stewart

Al Stewart will move from Sydney Director into the new position of Chief Operating Officer (COO). With the growth of City Bible Forum across the country, we have created the COO role to provide pastoral oversight to our seven City Directors. Given the increasing mobility and inter-connectedness of our workforce, there is a greater need and untapped potential for drawing on the combined resources of City Bible Forum towards the fulfillment of our vision. Al's vast ministry experience and evangelistic drive will equip him well for the different demands of this new position.



Mark Leong

Mark Leong will be the new Sydney Director starting January 2018. Having joined City Bible Forum as the Young Workers Program Manager, we have seen Mark and his team make a significant impact in the lives of many young workers during this time of transition. Through *Welcome to the Jungle*, *Headstart* and tailored outreach events, Mark has helped address obstacles to Christian maturity and found many gospel opportunities. We are excited about Mark leading a generational change in the work of proclaiming Jesus to the many workers who commute to the business districts in Sydney.



Tho Luu

Tho Luu is our friend and Sydney colleague who became seriously ill from a wisdom tooth infection that ultimately led him to withdrawing from ministry. After 6 months of hospitalisation, Tho is now living with his parents but is not expected to be able to work in the foreseeable future. We appreciate your prayers for Tho. If you would like to receive regular updates about Tho and/or give to the Tho Luu Foundation, please email: tholuufoundation@gmail.com



Glenn Hohnberg

We are sad to farewell Glenn at the end of this year. As our founding Brisbane Director, Glenn has spent a decade reaching people in Brisbane with the great news of Jesus. We are excited about his new plans, planting a church in Griffith University called Risen Church (check out risenchurch.org.au). It is a pioneering work, meeting students on campus, reading the bible and establishing new believers in church.



David Pitt

City Bible Forum will welcome David Pitt to our team as our new Brisbane Director in 2018. Dave is no stranger to City Bible Forum, having worked with us on a number of projects in the past. Dave is married to Tanya, and they have three children - Elizabeth, Stephen, and Anna. Dave worked for Hewlett-Packard in IT before retraining for pastoral work. He's been a pastor at St Lucia Bible Church for almost a decade. Dave has a passion for helping people meet Jesus and is really excited about joining us next year. He looks forward to what God will continue to do through City Bible Forum in the coming years.



David Graieg

David will be finishing with the Perth team at the end of the year to pursue further studies. He has been accepted to start a PhD at Sydney College of Divinity on the Implications of Memory Theory for Jesus' Resurrection and will continue to be based in Perth. David will have served for close to three years among the young workers and graduates in Perth.

Please join us in praying for these colleagues.

Some brief numbers

Here is a quick numerical summary of our equipping and outreach activities this year:

	Number of events	Number attended	Non Christians
Mobilising & Equipping events	54	1956	N/A
Engaging events	41	4620	1038
Regular forums	8 per week / fortnight	178 average	23 average

Adelaide

On Friday 23 June, 208 people from all walks of life, church backgrounds and in fact from all over the country, came together in Adelaide at the Celebration Dinner.

It was a fantastic cross section of people, all there because of a common love for Adelaide and a passion for the good news of Jesus to reach people at work.

The speaker, Al Stewart, gave a prophetic talk cleverly using Daniel 1 (Daniel the young graduate) and Daniel 6 (a man approaching the end of his work life) as the bookends of the topic, *Treading lightly in a changing world*. The talk resonated with current experience of growing hostility to Christian faith and challenged workers to neither be seduced at the start of their work life, nor compromise after a life of work. A local artist was commissioned to create a beautiful artwork entitled *Treading Lightly*, a miniature copy of which was given to every person on the night.



It was God honouring, fun, had a great vibe and Al's talk was deep but challenging and helpful to all.

*.....
How wise it is to tread lightly with integrity accepting that in many increasing ways we will just have to take it on the chin.*

Brisbane

This year Brisbane decided to aim for the audacious goal of seeing 100 people meeting Jesus. At the beginning of the year we had 3 people actively seeking to read the bible with colleagues, now we have 14. We had 3 enquirers meeting to read the Bible, now we have 20 people meeting regularly to read the Bible with a Christian – and some have become Christians!

One of our disciple makers, Phil, prayed in his Evangelistic Prayer Team (EPT) that God would reveal the person he would like him to invite to read the Bible. Later that week he excitedly told his EPT leader that he and his colleague had been discussing the essential nature of humanity – whether we are good or evil. The discussion led to Phil's opportunity and he took it – 'would you like to look at Jesus in John's gospel with me?' An excited yes was the response. Phil commented later, 'I didn't realise how easy it was to invite someone to read the Bible with me'. They have now been meeting for months!

I have no greater joy in my Christian life at the moment than when I'm reading the Bible one-to-one with my unbelieving colleague. Nothing else matters.

Please pray for Phil and our other disciple-makers and the unbelievers they are introducing to Jesus.



Canberra

It is exciting to witness a growing number of workers gathering to pray for their workplace! These are workers from various churches meeting regularly for prayer and encouragement.

I always find it refreshing to hear how others are going in seeking to proclaim Christ to their colleagues.

This is a new network of Evangelistic Prayer Teams and it's wonderful to see it grow from 1 team to 5 teams. Will you ask our heavenly Father to grow this network to 50 rapidly?!

Again it was good to share and reflect on matters that were meaningful and significant, and to pray at a level that was deep and sincere...inviting God to be present...a peaceful experience...appreciated. Thank you to all.



Extending the prayer network is central to the work of City Bible Forum especially now as workers are feeling increasingly isolated and challenged as believers. Will you join with us?

Melbourne

Bigger Questions is the regular lunchtime forum in Melbourne (the forums are also recorded for radio broadcast and podcast). Bigger Questions combines the story of a guest with the story of the Bible in an entertaining and thought-provoking show. It is aimed at being an easy invitation for workers to bring colleagues and to stimulate further questions. This year we have aimed at making 1-1 Bible reading the natural follow-up from the forums by providing Bible reading guides which were connected with the lunchtime conversation.

The latest Bigger Questions series has been based on the Ecclesiastes 'Chasing Life' reading guide produced by the team in Adelaide. The series has been our best attended lunchtime series for many years and many non-believers have been invited by colleagues and have



Hobart

Sam Chan recently spent three days in Hobart training over a hundred doctors, workers and pastors in how to think differently about workplace evangelism in sessions titled, "Evangelism in a Skeptical World", "How to be a Christian at work without being 'that person'" & "What workers wish pastors knew about workplace evangelism".

People appreciated the practical advice on how to connect with work colleagues and how listening and relationships can open up trusting conversations.

There are now 5 Evangelistic Prayer Teams operating in Hobart and many of the team members came to be encouraged by Sam's teaching. Sam and Will Longbottom, our Hobart Director, used the time to build relationships with ministers and city workers and to lay the groundwork for future events with Sam and other speakers.



My first thought was "Why didn't I bring 50 people to this?" It wasn't rocket science, most of it wasn't even new but the way it was packaged and presented was brilliant, funny and actionable. Would have to be the best presentation on how to evangelise I've ever heard.

Gave me confidence in getting to the 'world views' stage with my work colleagues.

attended on multiple occasions. Throughout the series, we have heard powerful testimonies from guests such as Anna McGahan (Australian actress and playwright) and Ian Harper (Reserve Bank board member). One worker, who has brought several colleagues to the series, has recently started reading the Ecclesiastes Chasing Life reading guide with a colleague who was stimulated to 'check out' Christianity for himself. We are delighted that this forum is stimulating broader discussion of the Bigger Questions.

This Bigger Questions series on Ecclesiastes has been incredibly thought provoking and relevant to our society today. They have been an excellent forum to invite my non Christian colleagues because the questions raised are on the forefront of their minds- what is the meaning of life? The topics have attracted them to come (and keep returning) and the Chasing Life guide has enabled us to start reading the Bible together! Initially I was apprehensive about asking my colleague to read the guide (and Ecclesiastes) but the questions were easy to approach, encouraged us to reflect and facilitated much discussion!

Perth

During August close to 1000 people heard Dr Don Carson at an evangelistic event called 'If God is so Loving ... WHY?' at Perth Convention Centre. Dr Carson is an author and research professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Illinois. He addressed the very difficult and sensitive topic of suffering based on the six pillars he presents in his work 'How Long, O Lord?'

Dr Carson was very insightful and engaging. Many were greatly encouraged by the evening. About 150 guests were present. To hear the talk, visit citybibleforum.org.

The follow-up lunch time discussion group worked through John Dickson's book *If I Were God I'd End All the Pain*.



Dr Carson was fantastic - Very knowledgeable, practical and understandable.

Great session - helped me greatly to gain a better perspective.

Loved the talk. Easy to enter into the profound thoughts.

Tonight's talk was great food to help develop a robust worldview with respect to suffering and evil. I will keep thinking and studying this topic.

Sydney

To a standing room only crowd of 250 people, the Centre for Public Christianity's John Dickson, Simon Smart and Justine Toh opened the door on the best and worst the church has to offer from history. Sam Chan moderated the discussion at *The Edge* that centred on the subject matter from the upcoming documentary, *For the Love of God: How the church is better and worse than you ever imagined*.

John and Simon addressed a range of topics on the failures and contributions that the church has produced throughout history in two short talks. They shed light on some of the darker sides of history and also showed how the Christian faith has contributed to making the world a better place. About 80 non-Christian guests were present.



Great speakers, fascinating topic and a fantastic event. Thank you for putting it on!

I did not agree with everything they shared, but I thought the panel was respectful and informative.

This was a great event and I am looking forward to the next one.



Contact us to join, pray or support our work:

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