

# Annual Report Summary 2023



# 2023 Summary Director of Ministries

The full Annual Report is again fully online this year and can be accessed here :



Welcome to your Association's 2023 Annual Report!

In 2023 we pushed into the next season of the Gen1K Vision. It is a season particularly focused in 3 areas:

## 1. **Developing Leaders:**

More leaders, and greater diversity in our leadership base – both men and women, and leaders from diverse cultural backgrounds. Plus, prioritising developing future leaders.

## 2. **Mobilising Healthy Churches:**

Increasing the rate of multiplication of new congregations. To reach our Gen1K Vision together, we need to be planting at the rate of about 5% of our churches each year. By God's grace we got there for the first time in 2023, with 17 churches started across our movement!

## 3. **Partnering together:**

Further strengthening our regional networks and teams as they put in place contextual expressions of the Gen1K Vision. It also includes enhancing our strategic support services, particularly around technology.

2023 saw the final of 3 years' extra funding to our Gen1K Vision via a generous external grant. These funds are targeted particularly towards the development of multiplying leaders and the commencement of new churches. Alongside contributions from our churches and some of our agencies they have enabled us to develop the resources and supports to put into practice our new strategic plan.

I'm excited to announce that following a further application process, the same funder has committed to extending grant support for a further (final) 4 years through to 2027.

For the first time in years our Annual Assembly returned to a multi-day event as The Gathering, providing opportunity for prayer, reflection and focus on our future plans, and AGM business. It also gave time for deciding on the Way Forward resolutions regarding affiliation, Baptist values, and marriage. These matters have taken much time and focus across our movement in recent years. We continue to need to listen to the Lord and to one another well.

Significant work was done in advocacy with government across the year. Some of this was in the general area of religious freedom with nuanced responses needed during the introduction of the Conversion Therapy Practices Ban Act (a positive reform in principle, marred however by overreach), and the Equality Bill (still in process).

It is also a privilege for me to serve on the inaugural NSW Govt 16-person Faith Affairs Council - representing Baptists and the broader evangelical family, building relationships across faith groups and speaking into government policy.

It was wonderful to see some of the leaders from our Karen, Chin and Bamar churches join with Association leadership as part of a national Baptist advocacy push around the desperate situation in Myanmar.

Please continue to be in prayer for us as a movement and pray for God's ongoing supernatural work among us by his Spirit as we continue to pursue our Gen1K Vision of 1000 healthy churches in a generation!

**Rev Dr Steve Bartlett**  
Director of Ministries



# Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT



Allen Sibley / 2024 Chair

## Assembly Council

- During 2023 the Assembly Council (AC) continued to address the matter that has dominated the work of the Council for the past three years, being the issues surrounding affiliation, Baptist values and marriage.
- The Association team, under the excellent leadership of our Director of Ministries, Steve Bartlett, continues to manage the day-to-day work of the Association with diligence and wisdom. We have been blessed to have a great team supporting Steve.
- AC continued to oversee the governance required for the healthy operation of the Association and support of local churches.
- We farewelled Tim Blencowe, Andrew Hall and Jonny Lam as Council members during the year, and thank them for their service and contributions to the Council. We welcomed Dr Catherine Casey from Parramatta City Church, Dr Edwina Murphy from Blakehurst Baptist Church and Pastor Matthew W Kennedy from Parkes Baptist Church as new Council members.
- Our long-serving Chair of AC, Jamie Long, concluded his service as a Chair at the end of 2023. He steps down from Council at the 2024 Annual Assembly. We thank Jamie for his gracious and skillful leadership of AC.



Jenny Casey / AOT Chair & Team Leader

## Affirmation Of Ministry

- The Affirmation Oversight Team (AOT) is a standing committee of the Assembly Council, charged with considering and determining matters related to the accreditation and recognition of ministers for the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT.
- One of the ongoing responsibilities for the Affirmation Oversight Team is to conduct interviews for those pursuing ministry affirmation. In future all interviews will be for recognition candidates, with those proceeding to accreditation from recognition undergoing a supplementary interview.
- In 2023 the AOT and other volunteers interviewed seven transfer of accreditation applicants, four applicants for accreditation and 10 applicants for recognition.



Jamie Long / Outgoing Chair of Assembly Council

## Nominations Committee

- The task of finding nominees for Assembly Council and other committees is not easy. While there are many gifted and capable people within the Baptist movement, it is always a challenge to find the right people for the right places.
- In February 2024 Allen Sibley took over the chairing responsibilities for this committee as part of his role as chair of Assembly Council.

# GEN1K Discipleship & Leadership Development



Craig Corkill / Associate Director

## Discipleship & Leadership Development Report

- 147 leaders engaged with strategies that coached them toward the multiplication of disciples, leaders and churches.
- Two new training initiatives commenced – one for new Senior/Sole Pastors and one in the area of Adaptive Leadership.
- Reduced number of churches looking for pastors.
- A growing number of churches engaging in Leadership Pipeline training.



Sarah Alarcon / Team Leader

## Youth and Young Adult Ministries

- The inaugural cohort of the IMPACT Gap Year occurred in 2023 with 5 students.
- State Youth Camp had its 9th year with 20 churches and 330 young people and leaders attending.
- The roll-out of our Healthy Youth Ministry Framework with over 15 churches engaging in 2023.



Jenny Casey / Team Leader

## Accreditation & Recognition

- The Affirmation of Ministry Guidelines voted in at the Annual Assembly in May 2022 meant that 2023 was the first full year of the new process.
- The Confidential Questionnaire, the screening document used with all new applicants, underwent a significant reworking.
- In 2023 we held six Leadership Incubator days with accredited and recognised minister candidates.
- A group of new panel interviewers were trained in Greater West for Christ, with a view to this being rolled out in other regions in 2024 and beyond.
- We held the annual Accreditation Service at Macquarie Park when 11 new ministers were accredited.



Accreditation service



# GEN1K Discipleship & Leadership Development



Louise Bartlett / Team Leader

## Children & Families Ministries

- In 2023 in consultation with BYM, Connect expanded to be for all Next Generation ministry teams. Connect 2023 was held in 10 regions across NSW and the ACT, involving over 250 people and 90 churches.
- We launched “Leadership Development 101”, a training video and reflection guide designed for teens and tweens as they start serving in ministry.
- During National Baptism week a webinar looking at our Baptist theological and practical approaches to the baptism of children was held, resulting in the development of new national resources specifically to support churches in acknowledging and celebrating faith steps of children.
- State Kids Camp, for kids in years 4 to 7, ran again in July 2023 at Kiah Ridge. SKC sees churches connecting together to provide a peak experience helping kids to take steps in following Jesus.



Shelley Ashton / Team Leader

## Special Religious Education (SRE)

- 2023 saw a return to pre-Covid arrangements in schools and SRE operated without interruption in the broader sense.
- 2023 saw around 65 Baptist SRE teachers either retire from teaching or move to other churches. We had 50 new teachers authorised. We had around 470 Baptist authorised SRE teachers.
- We had around 130 people access our online self-directed course and another 200 or so access training via Zoom and face-to-face. Many other denominations also access our training.
- We are facing increased opposition to SRE with many groups openly challenging the place SRE has in class time in schools.



# GEN1K Mission and Church Development



Jamie Freeman / Associate Director

## Gen1k Mission and Church Development

- Churches engaged with multiple supported initiatives are growing at almost four times the rate of churches not engaged.
- Churches engaged with multiple supported initiatives are seeing more than two and a half times the rate of baptisms as churches not engaged.
- The launch of National Baptism Week and a renewed focus amongst our churches to see more people following Jesus together.
- The purchase of two properties for new and growing churches in Wilton and Thornton growth corridors.
- The roll out of the new Gen1K Support Guidelines that helps new and growing congregations connect with direct and indirect support like Seed and Growth Grants.



Tim Burns / Team Leader

## Church Health

- In 2023 the Church Health Team interacted with 126 Association churches. This represented an increase of 5% over the previous year.
- Proactive initiatives, include: adding a new cohort of 17 pastors to the Multiply program, developing the “CHAT” - a new resource: the Church Health Assessment Tool, offering the Simple Church Health Check, and producing two new resource packages.
- 37 pastors have now participated in Multiply, a two-year program of training and coaching.
- 35 churches have used the CHAT to measure health across six key areas.
- 3 churches requested a Simple Church Health Check in 2023. This uses the CHAT, a Strengths - Concerns - Opportunities and Threats analysis, and seven key quantitative markers to produce a report containing reflections and recommendations.
- New resources include a Navigating Difficult Decisions package and a Pastoral Review package.



Regional Church Health Facilitators Catch-Up



Specialised Consultancy Training with Tim Dyer of John Mark Ministries

# GEN1K Mission and Church Development



Ken Kamau / Team Leader

## Church Multiplication

- Our Blended Ecology strategy has focused us on four models of church plants: Simple Churches, Neighbourhood Churches, Regional Churches & Resource Churches.
- In 2023 we celebrated 17 new churches that comprised different expressions, with other church planting movements starting to use the Blended Ecology model as a reference point for their own church planting visions.
- Of the 17 new church plants in 2023, 11 of the planters were from Cultural & Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds.
- Our annual church planting conference FORM saw many CALD leaders with 50% of our attendees at FORM 2023 from CALD backgrounds, up from 21% the previous year.



Andrew Duncan / Team Leader

## Global Mission

- Our team of intercultural workers and Australian-based staff engaged with over 160 churches in person.
- We welcomed Tash Green to the Australian Intercultural Mission team, who will serve with Ministry to Muslims in Sydney.
- I have had the privilege of developing the Australian Intercultural Team, which is a growing group of intercultural practitioners and educators. Our vision encompasses initiatives to support churches & pastors in intercultural ministry.
- We've also been actively strengthening relationships with Baptist communities worldwide in countries such as Zambia, Bangladesh, Papua New Guinea, Papua, India & beyond.



Marbuen Diaz / Team Leader

## Church Witness and Intercultural Ministries

### Church Witness:

- **Baptistic Way of Community Advocacy**
  - First Nations led Listening Workshops where 72 people participated with Common Grace's Aboriginal Sunday campaign seeing 53 Baptist churches participate. We also engaged in advocacy regarding conversion practices ban, gambling reform and affordable housing.
- **Disaster Response Towards Resilience**
  - We addressed post-disaster mental health matters and instigated resiliency projects including a narrative therapy project, as well as exploring faith-based approaches to increased suicide rates and PTSD.
- **Converge 2023** -The focus for 2023 was the Myanmar conflict.

### Intercultural Ministries:

- **Locally** - We covered 300 strategic engagements, amongst 85 key Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) leaders, across over 40 CALD churches. We also discovered over 30 CALD-based existing networks.
- **Regionally** - We worked in three key regions to enable support for our CALD churches: Greater West For Christ, Transform Southern Sydney and in the Ryde area.
- **Nationally** - we collaborated across State and Territory based Associations/Unions to form the Intercultural Communities Taskforce.

# Ministry Standards & Operations



Jonathan Bradford / Team Leader

## Ministry Standards and Safe Church

- In 2023 we hosted 125 Creating Safe Spaces training workshops with 4000 participants in NSW/ACT.
- We continue to enjoy strong partnerships with Churches of Christ NSW/ACT, and the Baptist Union of Victoria, and we have recently entered a new partnership with the Baptist Churches of Western Australia.
- 23% of our affiliated churches have now fully satisfied the requirements of the Safe Church Health Check, and an additional 20% of churches have submitted an application which is still progressing.
- Our Safe Church Team Network Evening in May 2023 saw strong attendance numbers.
- Since 2019 churches have received 49 claims via the National Redress Scheme, and 25 common law legal claims. In total approximately 25% of our affiliated churches have had to respond to a historic claim in recent years.
- In late 2023 we completed a number of significant update projects.



Heidi Tak / Associate Director

## Operations

- We have equipped our churches through our Church Leaders Playbook, which includes a newsletter and training sessions.

- We continued the consolidation of our funds for efficiency and to assist in mobilising resources for strategic initiatives. Consequently, we have now seen the start of land banking for future church plants and the consolidation of our resources.
- Invested in technology to streamline processes and achieve enhanced CRM and database management. This is directly improving the overall support the Association provides to our churches, pastors and leaders.
- Property is key to our Gen1K goal, so in the last year we have formed a new committee, the Property Advisory Group, to help develop and provide support to our property strategies.



GodSpace

Tammy Earnshaw / Team Leader

## Godspace

- The redevelopment of the GodSpace curriculum resulted in 2023 seeing more Christian schools and children's ministry programs eager to use the new dynamic resource.
- In 2023 over 50 000 students explored the Christian faith with GodSpace in their SRE/RI classes in public schools. It is encouraging to see three hundred teachers regularly attending GodSpace curriculum training events as we support them in using the resources more effectively.
- We have continued to support churches in the Philippines with our excess resources delivered to many churches all over Cebu.

# Strategic Support & Regional Development



Grae McWhirter / Associate Director

## Strategic Support and Regional Development

- The Strategic Support and Regional Development Group includes the Communications and Events, Kiah Ridge, Ministry Standards, and 10 Regional Ministry Teams.
- Our regional ministers developed their teams and we held our second ever Regional Teams Conference.
- Our South Coast region officially became an affiliated ministry in 2023, now making 8 out of our 10 existing regions affiliated ministries.
- We started a new pastors' network in the Cumberland area of Sydney.
- Our Ministry Standards Team assisted and resourced our churches to have everything they need to be safe places.
- Our Communications and Events Team delivered key events including the Gatherings and times where our different Association teams provide specialist events and training.
- Kiah Ridge bounced back from the Covid years, with a full calendar, being a space where churches, schools and community groups meet and where God works.
- We held monthly online prayer gatherings and encouraged personal and group prayer by distributing our Let's Pray Together calendar.



Lorna Harper / Centre Manager

## Kiah Ridge

- Kiah Ridge saw an average of 15% increase in our three main indicators; bed nights, meals served and venue revenue.
- Guest booking confidence returned to full strength, although the typical uplift in group numbers we see year on year was far more modest than in previous years.
- Operational costs rose yet again this year, most notably power and food costs.
- Maintaining staffing levels was another mountain to climb in 2023, as we saw critical shortages in available staff in both the Hospitality and Grounds/Maintenance sectors.
- 2023 brought a start to a planned program of improvement and maintenance works for our venue buildings and other assets.

## Canberra Region

**Nick Barber** / Regional Minister - Canberra

- A Regional Leadership Team has been established in the last 12 Months.
- Leadership Development within the region identified as the immediate priority.
- Working towards Affiliating as a Regional Ministry of the Baptist Association and establishment of a Regional Ministry Hub.

## Central Coast Region

**Phil Blair** / Regional Minister - Coast Churches Network (CCN)

- We continue to gather together regularly as pastors and chaplains for prayer and connection.
- Inspired by the stories of other regions, the CCN Lead Team is exploring localised opportunities for income generation to support our objectives.
- We are commencing an Emerging Leaders Network of young people who can connect, collaborate, learn from, and encourage one another. The first cohort of around 12 young leaders will meet in early 2024.
- Multiple church planting opportunities are currently being explored in locations such as Avoca Beach, Mangrove Mountain, and East Gosford, while a lease was secured on a Uniting Church property in Ettalong which will house our newest church plant, Bloom Co.

## Greater West For Christ Region

**Mark Chapple** / Regional Minister - Greater West for Christ (GWFC)

- The Baptist Association team has now taken a key role in working with our not-for-profit businesses and GWFC Ministry initiatives in a commercial sense, alongside a smaller GWFC commercial team on the ground.
- Our first fundraising dinner for the operations of GWFC Chaplaincy raised \$70,000 for operations.
- GWChildcare raised its own commercial team and has had a significant year of strengthened operations and mission at our two sites of St Clair Baptist Church and Camden Baptist Church.

## Hunter Region

**Mark Brown** / Regional Minister - Hunter (H100)

- Our executive team meets fortnightly for prayer and discussion around planned ministry toward our H100 vision.
- Network development - six networks identified with key leaders from our H100 executive team to develop relationships over the next year.
- Church planting seed nights - prayer and discussion for our church planting vision.
- A good ending - West Wallsend Baptist made a decision to conclude their ministry. The building has been handed over to be overseen by the H100 ministry.
- Newest Church Plants - our three youngest Church plants are River of Life (Maitland Network), Table Church and Christ Church Summerland Point (Both East Lake Macquarie Network).

## Mid North & North Coast Regions

**Pete Davies** / Regional Minister - Mid North & North Coast

- The Mid North Coast region has seen a number of pastoral conclusions. Steve Harris (Stroud), Andrew Darnell (Wingham) and Chris Thornhill (Taree).
- There are a few churches that are seeing some steady slow growth (Port Macquarie, Sandy Beach, Coffs Harbour).
- There are the beginnings of signs of greater connection in joint projects with a few of the Churches in the North Coast region.

## Northern Rivers Region

**John Wilson** / Regional Minister - Northern Rivers

- A number of our pastors and churches have benefited from the two year Multiply journey.
- We have planted three church plants in our region in the last twelve months - 'Follow', a simple church, 'Explore', a neighbourhood church in Lennox Head and a church plant in Wardell, led by a team from Ballina Baptist.
- Our region is continuing to recover and rebuild following the floods of 2022. Steve Hales has continued in his role of Flood Relief Coordinator, assisting with chaplaincy work and financial assistance.
- We have launched a book of flood stories, called "Strong Together: Stories of Courage and Community from the 2022 Northern Rivers Floods".

## Riverina Region

**David Strong** / Regional Minister - Riverina

- The Young Adults Retreat in February welcomed believers from Hilston, Tumut and Young. There are also an increasing number of preachers traveling to smaller regional churches to bring the word of Christ.
- Griffith has been hosting a women's gathering. Women in ministry have regular informal but intentional gatherings to strengthen each other in Christ. Several Riverina churches have been acting as hubs for 'Equip Women'.
- Fifty men came to Farm Shed at Corowa and ate burnt sausages. They heard testimonies from other men and a simple story from a day in Jesus' life.
- Ron and Pam Schravemade have served the schools and churches in Hilston, Gundagai and Cootamundra. Martin and Miriam Staker have been participating in and facilitating evangelism events at Deniliquin, Griffith and Hilston.
- Martin has been running seminars in local churches to help train lay preachers and encourage pastors in preaching
- Refresh Pastor's Conference and Family Camp: Pastors and their families from all over the Riverina and the Western Districts gathered at Ridgecrest family camp for a weekend.
- Burning Brightly: Elders, deacons and pastors from every church in the Riverina were invited to an event called 'Burning Brightly'.
- Campfire: Pastors from across the Riverina gathered for a retreat where we shared our joys and sorrows and prayed for each other.

## Riverina Region (Cont'd)

- Martin has been conducting “Sounding Board” session with different churches. The church leadership gathers (with no preparation) and Martin asks two main questions: (1) what is healthy with your church at the moment (2) what is one thing that with a small amount of effort could make a big difference.
- Dale Skewes has been leading a team in a church plant at Ashmont and we are thankful for small evidences of the Lord’s grace.
- It has taken nearly eighteen months, but we are now rolling out a program called ‘Gospel Paddocks’ which seeks to cooperate with believing farmers to raise money to be able to continue to employ RBN staff.

## South Coast Region

**Michael Bate** / Regional Minister - South Coast

- Regular two leaders’ networks - The Illawarra Leaders Network in the north and the Shoalhaven Leaders Network in the south and combining these together as the South Coast Region.
- Formally aligned the South Coast Region to the Baptist Association through the creation and adoption of a Regional Affiliated Ministry Charter
- We have refocused our gatherings to centre on prayer and created the Regional Hi 5.
- Focus on a church plant from Wollongong Baptist into the rapidly expanding Tullimbar area.

## Transform Southern Sydney Region

**Jamie Wendt** / Regional Minister - Transform Southern Sydney (TSS)

- 2023 was a year where we continued to pursue our vision to see “100 healthy churches transforming the southern suburbs of Sydney”.
- 7 pastor’s networks within our region where pastors can come together for support and prayer, where we can be real and authentic with each other.
- Preaching training with Marc Rader: equipping and developing with both seasoned preachers and those new to preaching.
- 3 New Church Plants.
- Leadership Conference - Raising and Developing Teams of Volunteers.
- Throughout 2023 TSS has coached 17 Leaders with more than 100 hours of one-on-one ministry coaching.
- More than 30 mentoring sessions with pastors across the region throughout the year.
- 2 proactive consultancies and more than 30 other church health engagements, 2 pastors taken through the Multiply Program.
- Work with Association CALD leaders (Culturally And Linguistically Diverse) to help connect CALD churches to TSS. We have connections now with 14+ CALD pastors.

# Regional Ministries

## Western Baptist Churches Region

Wayne Spencer / Regional Minister - Western Baptist Churches

- We have had our second Pastors Family Camp. Around 70 of us met from the West and Riverina regions, with Steve Bartlett coming to share God's Word with us.
- Our pastors meet regularly every term to catch up, to encourage, support and spur one another on.
- A real need out here is a lack of pastors, with a number of churches searching, and a few who just cannot afford to appoint someone.

## Baptist Historical Society of NSW and ACT

Alan Rice / President



This Assembly (2024) is the 50th Anniversary of the Baptist Historical Society, founded in 1974 at Morling College.

NSW and ACT Baptist Churches have seen the benefit of placing their church records in a central independent facility that not only preserves them but allows access for historical reasons and if required, access under the National Redress Scheme.

In 2023, the Archives continued to provide a service to Baptist organisations and Churches, receiving Church statutory records and histories, images, films and artefacts. The work of collating, recording, and storing the material for use has been undertaken by volunteers who have a desire to preserve a Baptist heritage.

Archivist Ernest Windschuttel has produced a newsletter on articles and information on people and key events of interest received by the Archives. We receive articles that

focus on general history of a church, about a key person in the life of our churches or about experiences in an individual's life in touch with a Baptist ministry.

In September 2023, Dr Nicole Starling who had just taken on the role of Academic Dean at Morling College in addition to her position as lecturer in Church History, delivered a paper titled, "Elizabeth Saunders and the Kindness of God." Nicole is a Vice President of the BHS.



Bathurst Street Baptist Church



John Saunders Sermon - 1843

# Morling College

Tim MacBride / Principal, commenced 1 July 2023

Ross Clifford / Principal, concluded 30 June 2023 | Angelo Gratsounas / Chair, Morling College Board

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2023 saw Ross Clifford concluding as Principal after 26 years in the role. In June, the College took the opportunity to farewell Ross and acknowledge the enormous contribution he has made to its growth, mission, and reputation.

In July, Tim MacBride succeeded Ross as Morling's eighth Principal, after more than 15 years on the Bible and Theology faculty. Being home grown, both as a student and lecturer, Tim represents a change that is "generational, not directional," as he put it. He continues Morling's commitment to a strong and respectful evangelical ethos, the equipping of the whole believer in an educational model which is transformative, and the valuing of each person's call to serve God in a variety of ways.

## Morling College Initiatives and Updates

### Goals & Strategies

A key priority in 2023 was in the area of marketing and recruitment, given the decline in the theological education sector being experienced across the Western world. Early signs have been encouraging, with twice as many prospective students attending November open nights than in previous semesters; enrolments in Bible and Theology have stabilised; and there have been numerous anecdotal reports of churches working towards sending and funding new students.

Please continue to pray for this crucial area for our denomination as we work towards the Gen1K vision.

Another important priority was to increase the number of women in senior academic roles. In 2023, a scholarship encouraging females to pursue a research degree, named after Morling's first female student, Effie Baldwin. Nicole Starling was also appointed as Academic Dean and Gayle Kent named as Morling's first female Vice-Principal.

Morling has also been working to partner more closely with the Baptist Association in all forms of training, not just tertiary education. A joint working group is looking at opportunities for collaboration.

Underpinning all of this is a commitment to ensuring the long-term financial position of the College by taking necessary budgetary steps to reduce the operating deficit and commencing the next stage of the Sydney campus property development, in partnership with the Baptist Association.

### Malyon Merger

In July 2023, the College was approached by Queensland Baptists (QB) to consider a merger with Malyon Theological College. This move will give Morling the opportunity to expand its programmes into Queensland, while ensuring that the Baptist movement in that state has a viable denominational college in which to train its leaders. Morling and QB signed a Heads of Agreement document in May 2024, paving the way for the colleges to merge in January 2025.



## Bible and Theology

During 2023, the Bible and Theology faculty continued to work in close partnership with local churches and the Baptist Association teams in NSW/ACT and WA to provide flexible pathways and thorough training and equipping for evangelists, church planters, and pastoral leaders, as well as for people in a wide variety of different contexts and vocations who wish to integrate biblical faith with the issues of daily life and work.

One manifestation of that partnership was the launch in 2023 of our new IMPACT Gap Year program, developed and delivered in close collaboration with the NSW/ACT Baptist Youth Ministries team. We were delighted to receive news in early 2024 of a successful grant application to the Vincent Fairfax Foundation for seed funding to assist us in promoting and expanding that programme across the next three years.

## Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care (CCSC) and Professional Supervision

Our CCSC faculty continued to demonstrate growth across 2023, with an increase in student numbers engaging in all three discipline areas. Graduates of our Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care, and Professional Supervision awards continue to secure positions in community organisations, churches, hospitals, aged care, and private practice, providing much needed support to others.

A highlight of 2023 was the successful launch of CCSC in Perth, with a number of units being delivered on-campus in Perth across both semesters.

## Education

In 2023, the Education faculty continued delivery of the Master of Education and Master of Education (Leadership). Our Initial Teacher Education programme launched in Semester 1, 2023, with 17 students in the initial cohort. At the beginning of 2024, there are now 47 students in the programme, which seeks to embed students in Christian schools to be mentored and formed in community while they study.

## Faculty Appointments and Farewells

Over the past year, Morling has welcomed several new teaching faculty members: Gillian Dixon (Associate Dean of CCSC, Perth), Emma Wylde (Lecturer in Counselling, Perth), Christine Mao (Lecturer in Chaplaincy & Spiritual Care), Shelley Fairgrieve (Lecturer in Counselling, Sydney), and Dr Andrew Dunstan (Lecturer in Christian Thought, Sydney).

During 2023 we farewelled our Sydney-based lecturer in Pastoral and Practical studies, Keith Mitchell. We are grateful for Keith's many years of faithful service and wish him well in his new role as the Leadership Program Director at the School of Professional Practice (University of Divinity). We also said goodbye to Dr Matthew Andrew, lecturer in Christian Thought and with Morling Online, as he moved to Tasmania to take up a new role in mediation.

## Morling College Council/Board Participants

The Morling College Board met 7 times in 2023. In addition, the Directors participated in regular subcommittee meetings to oversee academic matters, property development, finance, residential accommodation, risk management and human resources.

## Morling Foundation and Property

The Morling Foundation continues to support the College and provide cash flow for the property development. The Morling Foundation's 2023 Financial Reports, including the Directors' report, is provided separately to the Baptist Churches' Annual Assembly.

Morling College is grateful for the shared vision and income contributions of the Morling Foundation and Morling Residential College (MRC). This income allows Morling to continue to subsidise the cost of study for students while providing a quality service. We are pleased that MRC is again at capacity, with students drawn from 25 different nations.

During 2023 The College and Foundation Boards agreed to proceed with a joint development on the Macquarie Park Campus known as "Macquarie Rise." Construction is planned to begin in August 2024 and be completed by the end of 2026.

## 2023 Main Events

- **Sand Play Therapy Workshop** – March, Sydney Campus; July, Perth Vose Campus
- **Graduation** – March
- **Spiritual Warfare Forum** – June
- **Annual Tinsley Lecture** – May, Sydney Campus
- **60 Years of Vose Celebration** – June
- **Creative Resources in Chaplaincy and Supervision** – July, Perth Vose Campus
- **Faith + Work Seminar** – August, Sydney Campus
- **Children's Ministry Webinars** – Various Dates
- **Gender Dysphoria Seminars** – Various Dates
- **SCEG (Scholarly Christian Educators Gatherings)** – Various Dates
- **Mental Health First Aid** – Various Dates
- **Open Nights** – Various Dates
- **Research Seminars** – Various Dates

# Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT



Mr Paul Holding / Chairman

## Baptist Churches of New South Wales Property Trust

The Property Trust met formally on 6 occasions during the year, both face to face and by Zoom teleconference. We are grateful for the assistance of the Association of Baptist Churches who provide facilities for these meetings.

Documents required for property transactions are examined by our solicitors to ensure they are authorised by the churches before being executed. Members of the Property Trust liaised with our solicitors to execute 45 documents on behalf of 27 churches. We are now using Messrs Toomey Pegg or C S Y Legal for all our legal work and churches are requested to liaise with our secretary for advice on which firm to use.

A number of churches have funds from the sale of property invested by the Property Trust, pending purchase of alternate property. These funds are mainly invested with Baptist Financial Services, thereby supporting their ministry to our churches.

Another part of our role which is becoming more prevalent in recent years is the submission of grant applications to various government bodies on behalf of our churches. Again this is owing to the lack of contractual ability of our churches to submit the applications. During the year our secretary has liaised with 12 churches to lodge 13 applications for some \$310k. Some of these were declined and grants worth \$206k are awaiting decisions.



Directors: Graeme Mitchell, Matthew Duggan,  
Nigel Glasby and Steve Bartlett

## Baptist Foundation of NSW Ltd

The number of Trusts administered by the Company or for which the Company has responsibility is 35. The purpose, terms, conditions, and size of the various Trusts administered by the Foundation vary significantly with the total funds invested by the Foundation approximately \$2.2 million. The Foundation employs no staff and investing, accounting, administration, and legal work is performed by the volunteer directors.

Mr Ronald Cardwell resigned as director during the year. Mr Graeme Mitchell, a previous Secretary of the Foundation, was appointed to the board.

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Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

- Acts 2:46-47



# Affiliated Groups and Agencies



**BAPTIST WORLD AID**

## Baptist World Aid Australia

Melissa Lipsett / CEO

[www.baptistworldaid.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/TAI\\_AnnualReport\\_FY23-80e7d51b05876d0c.pdf](http://www.baptistworldaid.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/TAI_AnnualReport_FY23-80e7d51b05876d0c.pdf)



## Bedford College Limited

BAPTIST BUSINESS COLLEGE PTY LTD trading as BEDFORD COLLEGE

Steve Dixon / CEO

[www.thegathering.com.au/annual-report-2023/partners/#bedford](http://www.thegathering.com.au/annual-report-2023/partners/#bedford)

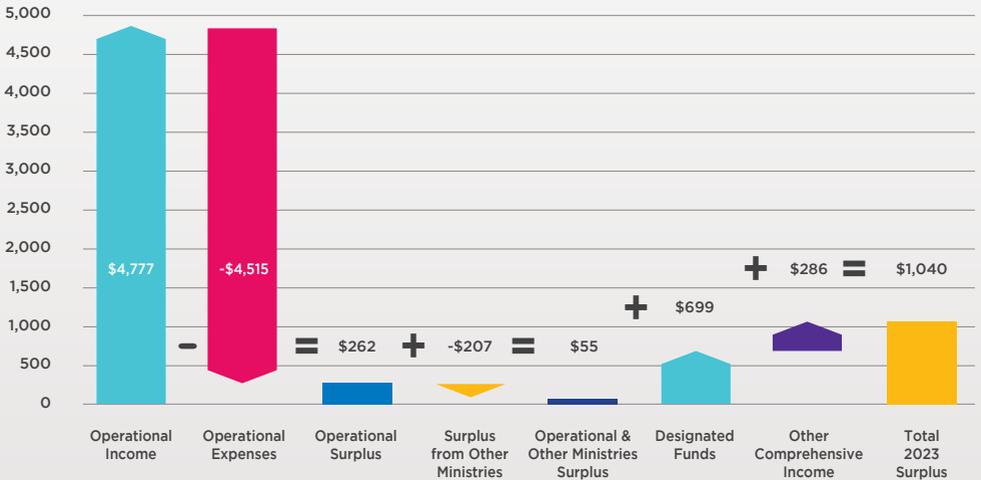


## Baptist Financial Services

David Slinn / CEO

[www.bfs.org.au/wp-content/uploads/BFS\\_AnnualReport2023.pdf](http://www.bfs.org.au/wp-content/uploads/BFS_AnnualReport2023.pdf)

# 2023 Income Statement





The full Annual Report is again fully online this year and can be accessed here :