

Annual Report Summary 2021



Baptist Churches
of NSW & ACT

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2021 Summary

Director of Ministries

There are many highlights (and some challenges!) to share about the ongoing ministry of your Association and its Affiliated Groups in what was another extraordinary year. This Summary Annual report sketches the picture and I trust leads you to read further our full Report, which is again completely online this year. You can access this at:

www.thegathering.com.au/AnnualReport

We have seen God at work in remarkable ways. Despite significant parts of NSW & ACT spending a third of the year in lockdown, 10 new churches were planted across our movement. Almost 50 churches were mobilised for evangelism and discipleship through specific supports of the Association. 3 new family units went out supported from our churches to serve in intercultural mission. Grant funding for 3 years over and above normal giving from churches has allowed us to increase our capacity in supporting church multiplication and leadership development, as well as commencing a multi-year strategic roadmap for transforming our information technology platforms for ministry in the years ahead.

In the midst of COVID, 2021 was also a year of restructure for the Association staff team, to enable growth. This has allowed greater focus on support and ministry at a regional level as the Gen1K vision for multiplication is embedded more and more in our movement's culture.

I want to pay tribute to each and every staff member and volunteer whose commitment to our mission in the midst of change and disruption this year has been nothing short of extraordinary.

COVID again proved a challenge to mission and ministry, with patterns of engagement disrupted across churches. Our Association team has spent significant energy supporting, encouraging and standing with leaders navigating this season. And as a movement we continue to have challenging and complex issues before us that we are seeking to work through together.

If I was to highlight one final thing that has most excited me about 2021 it would be this: for the first time ever, leaders and members from across our churches joined together in 3 online prayer gatherings. I am reminded again that our efforts in mission, if not accompanied, covered and protected in prayer, will be of little eternal consequence. God moves as his people pray. May it be so for us as we continue to pursue his Kingdom vision for us together in the times ahead.

Steve Bartlett

Director of Ministries





Gen1k Leadership Development

- We supported leaders through personal connection, coaching and mentoring and through events including online monthly Insights, Leadership Conversations and The Gathering, plus events and training in each of our specific leadership areas.
- During 2021 48 churches were searching for a solo or senior pastoral leader. 18 of those churches called a new pastor to lead them.
- 16 new ministerial leaders were accredited.
- We're excited to recommend to the 2022 Annual Assembly new Affirmation of Ministry Guidelines, representing the conclusion of a significant 3 year project.



Youth and Young Adult Ministries

- Another challenging year supporting churches in their youth and young adult ministry.
- Launch of the Impact Gap Year program in partnership with Morling College (since deferred).
- Appointed 5 volunteer regional support workers for our Sydney churches.



Children & Families Ministries

- Connect Day in 11 regions across NSW and ACT.
- Equipping and inspiring through webinars, emails, resources, videos, retreats and coaching.
- Partnering with Morling College & Intergenerate to train and develop leaders.
- Supporting all churches to welcome children as fellow disciples.



Special Religious Education

- Continuation of training as well as fulfilling compliance requirements for hundreds of SRE teachers.
- Supporting SRE through COVID with significant challenges around lockdowns, restrictions with vaccinations. SRE paused from Term 2; some resumed in Term 4.
- 2021 saw the depletion of teachers due to vaccine mandates and also those retiring after many faithful years of teaching.
- Expanded support for High School SRE teachers.

GEN1K

Mission and Church Health



Church Health

- Consultancy help to 18 churches.
- Engagements with more than 50 other churches.
- Working with 6 congregations considering affiliation.
- 9 leaders completed the 2-year consultancy training, with 24 new leaders commencing.



Church Multiplication

- 10 individuals went through the discernment process and received approval as Newstart Church Plants.
- 3 new team members joined (part time) bringing years of experience and new energy.
- More churches stepping up to be Sending Churches or ask how they can partner and support those starting new kingdom initiatives.



Church Witness

- Growth in Baptist partnerships saw the launch of the “Plan A” website (evangelism training), the Safer Spaces Toolkit (DFV), and the Justice 2021 Report (with Australian Baptist Ministries “A Just Cause”).
- Disaster relief and recovery work continued in several areas including the north coast, Riverina, South Coast, lower Blue Mountains, and the Hawkesbury Valley.
- 80 students trained in evangelism principles through a partnership with Morling College.
- 7 Baptist organisations formed a learning community to grow together in an understanding of walking in justice with First Nation peoples of Australia.



Global Mission

- Preparing to send intercultural workers within NSW (Siddique and Fozia Paul, Daniel Sze).
- Developed a one year Exploring Mission course for members of Baptist Churches to understand Global Mission theology and practice and personally engage intercultural ministry locally.



Safe Church and Ministry Standards

- Respond to National Redress Scheme claims, civil litigation claims, pastoral complaints, persons of concern and Reportable Conduct matters.
- Implement Safe Church policies, with 30 churches now fully satisfying the Safe Church Health Check and many others in process.
- Develop Safe Church culture, with 3600 participants at 105 Creating Safe Spaces workshops as well as 900 participants via Baptist Union of Victoria.



Communications & Events

- COVID - Association communication and engagement around COVID-19 and our response. This included frequent updates across many channels and a constant pivoting of events.
- EVENTS - A Special Assembly and a combined Annual Assembly & The Gathering were undertaken with some of the highest participation rates and engagement seen at assemblies. Also numerous other events, many of which were impacted by COVID.
- CONTACT MANAGEMENT - All internal processes were translated and built into a single database system establishing a platform that will improve the level of service that the Association provides.



Prayer

- Despite lockdown, over 30 Churches participated in the 40 Days of Prayer campaign.
- 3 NSW/ACT Baptist online Prayer Gatherings held for the first time ever, including before Special Assembly and the Annual Assembly.
- National Baptist online Prayer Gatherings commenced with focus around national and international events.
- Let's Pray Together E-News has helped our faithful network of prayer partners to pray informatively, ensuring prayer underpins everything we do in the Baptist movement.



Kiah Ridge

- Retention of every member of our casual team despite the COVID lockdowns and many cancelled bookings.
- Significant preparation for masterplanning of the site and future development.
- Supernatural financial provision.
- Extraordinarily full forward bookings for 2022 – praise God!



Operations & Balance Ministry Services (BMS)

- Supported churches with advice in relation to finance, employment, administration, compliance, governance, reporting, stipends, remuneration and taxation issues.
- Supported many churches to navigate the impacts of COVID through regular information updates and application assistance with JobKeeper and other government support.
- BMS grew to 30 churches utilising full-service bookkeeping plus regular assistance to another 15.
- We were able to assist in providing real data to support the successful advocacy that occurred regarding Covid19 NSW government financial assistance.
- Commenced significant investment in IT capacity to enhance the ability to serve our churches and deliver the Gen1K vision in the years ahead.



Godspace

- Major milestone with the launch of our all-new 3-year Godspace primary curriculum.
- Year 1 resources available for use from 2022.
- 77% of the \$1M funds required for the project has been raised!



Assembly Council

The Assembly Council (AC) was able to continue its work and pattern of regular meetings throughout 2021, despite the many disruptions caused by the ongoing pandemic.

AC was 3 members short for much of the year due to an anomaly in the voting process at the 2021 Annual Assembly where there were an abundance of nominees. It will be recommending changes to the election process so this situation does not recur.

AC dealt with many routine governance issues required for the healthy operation of the Association. Significant time was also spent with complex issues such as affiliation and implementation of Assembly decisions.

2021 was the end of Steve Bartlett's first 5-year term as Director of Ministry. AC did a comprehensive review and Steve was appointed for a further 5-year term at the Annual Assembly.



Baptist Churches of New South Wales Property Trust

Mr Paul Holding - Chairman,
Mr David Evans - Secretary/Treasurer,
Members of the Property Trust met with our solicitors on 41 occasions to execute 107 documents on behalf of 37 churches. A number of churches have funds from the sale of property invested by the Property Trust, pending purchase of alternate property. During the year our secretary has liaised with 19 churches to lodge 33 grant applications to government and other bodies. These resulted in grants of \$165,455 being approved.

Morling College

Ross Clifford - Principal

Bill Rusin - Chair, Morling College Board

Morling College Campuses

Morling expanded in size at the start of 2021! The merger with Vose Seminary was finalised and 2021 academic year saw one college, with two campuses (Vose/Perth and Sydney). This has been a benefit to our students with increase resources, faculty, and opportunities for study. It has also delivered a strong academic and administrative team to ensure the future of quality education. We are better together!

Morling continues with plans for the development of both its Sydney and Perth campus. Our campus videos give a short and inspiring update on how we use our resources in our vision of training and equipping people. Both videos have input from their respective Director of Ministries, Steve Bartlett, and Karen Siggins (interim).

Perth Campus:

<https://vimeo.com/646315846/62dd159cca>

Sydney Campus:

<https://vimeo.com/650567708>

We thank God for the ongoing cooperation, vision and direction which is evident in these plans. We also appreciate the Morling Foundation Board, as it oversees the investment and distribution of property proceeds and legacies for the College's sustainable growth.

For most of us 2021 has been challenging year. Both campuses have responded to government initiatives with respect to Covid and have ensured that the College operates within all guidelines. This has meant most of our classes have been delivered on campus, live stream, and live stream record and online throughout 2021.

Because Morling has an advanced online program we continued to quickly adjust to Covid lockdowns and restrictions. We have kept in touch with students and monitored their progress in these extraordinary days. We thank the staff for their extra work and commitment that allowed us to continue to move forward as a college. Morling is committed to leading the way in what the Covid experience means for future education.

Be assured that all our courses are available and will be delivered in ways that students can access them irrespective of their circumstances. With respect to our Residential College on our Sydney campus, prayers have been answered, as with overseas students returning the MRC is back to its normal occupancy. Please pray for the MRC and students from over 21 nations and continue to encourage those who are considering a residential college to look at Morling, which offers strong pastoral support.

Morling College Initiatives and Updates

Scholarship Program

The launch of our Scholarship Program had a significant impact on students in 2021. This included General Scholarships, Tinsley Bequest Scholarships, Kel Willis International Student Scholarships, Chaplaincy and Baptist Care Scholarships, TOGA scholarships, and Matching Scholarships. The Scholarship Committee were deeply impressed by the quality of applicants.

Snapshot:

- Number of official Scholarships accepted: 80.

- Percentage of new students in 2021: 43.5%.
- Faculties Represented: Bible and Theology, Counselling, Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care, Education.
- Total funds allocated: \$400,744.43.

Vocational Education & Training (VET)

We have entered into an arrangement with Malyon Vocational Training for 2022, to open up opportunities for VET-based ministry training provided by MVT.

Professional Supervision

Professional Supervision is an important and expanding field of practice. Working with a team from both our Sydney and Perth campuses, Morling has developed a new Graduate certificate of Professional Supervision, which has been accredited by TEQSA to admit students in 2022.

Religious Freedom

Morling College has continued in 2021 its active involvement with ACHEA (Australian Christian Higher Education Alliance) in lobbying with respect to the Federal Religious Discrimination Bill and NSW State Legislation.

Education

In 2021 Morling College announced the appointment of Dr John Collier as the Dean of Education. Dr Collier will continue to lead Morling in equipping Christian teachers and focus on our existing courses: Master of Education and Master of Educational Leadership. He is also exploring with key stakeholders the following initiatives:

- Initial Teacher Education.
- A Doctoral program.
- MIISTE (Morling Institute of Interdisciplinary Studies in Theology & Education).

Goals and Strategies

- The following strategic areas were the focus as a College for 2021:
- Develop Education Opportunities.
- Explore opportunities for Vocational Training (VET).
- Steward our property and income.
- Strengthen our staff and student community and culture.
- The Morling Board have approved a new vision/strategy for 2022-2025.

Morling Press

New 2021 Publications:

- Rise - Reimagining the Resurrection Life by Ross Clifford and Jim Baucom.

Books in Progress:

- Adventures to Godliness: Filling the Hole in Your Bucket List By Dr. Scott Wigginton.
- Silas Mead: The Man, His Descendants and His Legacy By Ken R Manley, Rosalind Gooden, Stefanie C Pearce.
- Vital: An Exercise in Practical Theology for Australian Churches By Ian Hussey and Anne Klose.
- Why on Earth Should We Pray? By Raymond Case.

Other Morling College Council/Board

The Morling College Board met six times in 2021. In addition, the Directors participated in regular subcommittee meetings to oversee academic matters, property development, finance, residential accommodation, risk management and human resources.

Affiliated Groups and Agencies

BAPTIST WORLD AID

Baptist World Aid Australia

Melissa Lipsett – CEO

<https://baptistworldaid.org.au/resources/annual-reports/>



BaptistCare NSW & ACT

Charles Moore – CEO

<https://baptistcare.org.au/annual-report-2021-chair-and-ceo-report>



Bedford College Limited

Stephen Moynan – CEO

Refining Our Mission And Values

Bedford College's new Statement of Christian Philosophy and Practice is being finalised. It will ensure that our approach to vocational education is anchored in a Biblical Christian philosophy.

Governance Structure

We welcomed Phillip Nash and Matthew Fletcher to the Board of Directors during the year.

Operations Update

Bedford College farewelled Dr Stephen Smith, the interim CEO, and welcomed Stephen Moynan as its new CEO.

Despite the continuing challenges amid COVID volatility, a stable level of students has been maintained. We are thankful to our dedicated staff.



Baptist Financial Services

David Slinn CEO

We have been able to continue to grow and thrive, with total assets now exceeding \$500m at 31 December 2021. During 2021, client funds grew by 5.7%. Overall lending totalled an amazing \$276m at year end of which \$127m was lent within NSW & ACT. BFS capital increased to over \$40 million and over \$1 million in grants were made to the Association of NSW & ACT Baptist Churches. Over \$2 million of grants were made by BFS to Baptist work nationally.

Support to develop a national domestic violence training program for Baptist leaders and significant increased support to Australian Baptist Ministries. BFS also continues to sponsor the online Church Finance Handbook which had a major revamp during the year.

BFS's GiveWay was significantly upgraded to a new platform during the year and is real help to churches during this COVID period when electronic giving is more important than ever.

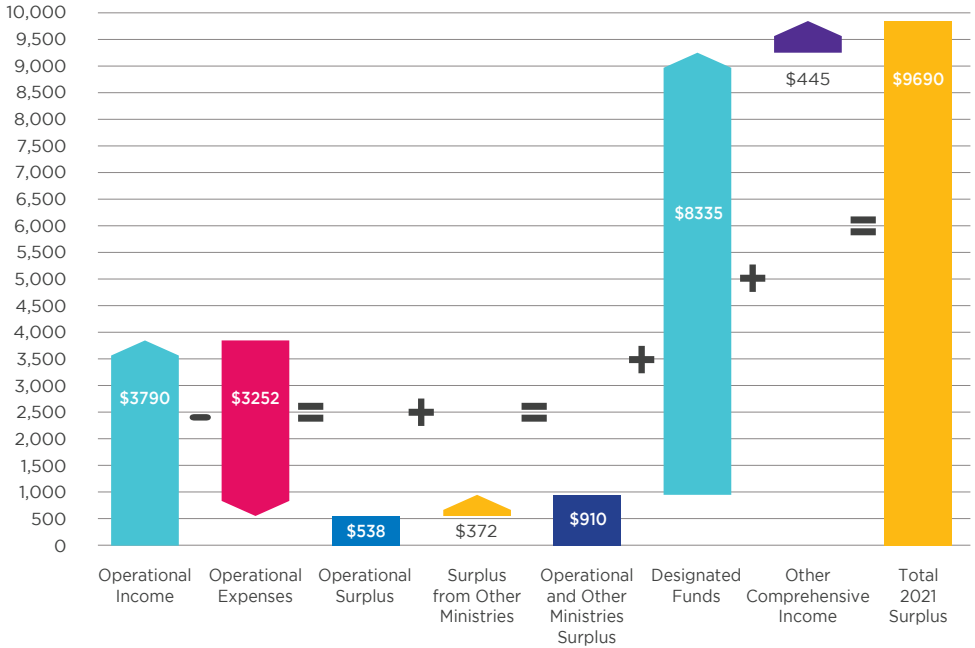
We also welcome on board Robert Ellis as a new National Relationship Manager and Peter Chi as a new NSW Relationship Manager.

Baptist Foundation of NSW Ltd

Matthew Duggan, Nigel Glasby, Ronald Cardwell, Steve Bartlett, Directors

The number of Trusts administered by the Company or for which the Company has responsibility is 35 with the total funds invested by the Foundation approximately \$2.2 million

2021 Income Statement



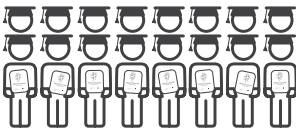
2021 Highlights

Disaster Recovery Fund



Released Over **\$60k**

16 People Accredited



People Attended Events or Training



10 Church Plants Approved



173 Churches Attended Insights

Q&A

4k+ People Attended CSS Training



Unique Visitors to Association Websites



Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.

- 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 (ESV)



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