

HeartBeat

New hospital for Bumba



Bumba Division is located in Commune de Ngaliema, Lukunga district, Kinshasa Province, in Democratic Republic of Congo.

The main problems they face are healthcare, water, poor roads and erosion. The houses are also poorly constructed because most of the people living there are poor and vulnerable. During a rainy season the past month, roads were completely destroyed and many houses came down rendering many people homeless. Most children and women have since fallen sick. The region has only one health centre and they are unable to cater for all the sick people.

We started the construction of the hospital in October 2015 and finished completely in May 2016. The hospital construction was fully supported by me and my family, and when the Bumba population saw someone from the South Kivu province coming to build in their area, they were so surprised. This led them to contribute their time and energy, helping the masons and engineers in the construction. Others came with sand, and some of the women prepared food for the masons. This support caused the hospital construction to progress very quickly. When it was launched, the whole population came around, singing and dancing, rejoicing for their clinic. The day we launched, the hospital was full with patients. Others came from neighbouring divisions and districts. Many of the patients were surprised to see how warmly received they were and how efficient the treatment was, particularly those with sick children who had not had the opportunity to be treated before. Most were crying tears of joy.

MHCD Bumba Hospital (Bethesda Medical Centre) has been of great help to the population of Bumba and its surrounding district, and it has been full every day. We are so grateful to God who gave us the opportunity to construct the hospital. We are also grateful to all of you for your continued prayers and support so we can continue serving the less fortunate.

Dr Luc Mulimbalimba



Sat 3 Sept

South Australian State Gathering

Sat 19 Nov

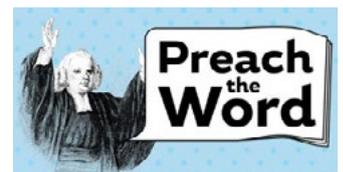
NSW/ACT State Gathering

16-20 Jan 2017

BMi Summer School
Gisborne, Vic

5-9 Jun 2017

National Leaders Gathering
Grindelwald, Tas



BMi Summer School 2017
Register online now at
www.bmi.org.au/summerschool



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Proclaiming and possessing the precious promises at the NLG

Grindelwald resort in Tasmania's beautiful Tamar Valley once again provided the backdrop to this year's (Inter) National Leaders Gathering in May/June.

Whilst the BMi family in Australia was well represented by all states, we were honoured to have a large contingent of international guests join us too. Joe and Primrose Chavez from the Philippines were accompanied by the King family (originally from China), DR Luc from DR Congo was there with his friend William Ouma from Kenya, and Samuel Babu Merupu from India came with three of his pastors — Brenham, Noah, and Paul. It was wonderful to begin building relationship with other cultures and to hear their stories from all over the world.



After arriving, settling in, meeting our roommates and enjoying a delicious dinner, we gathered to hear Peter Frogley introduce the theme and set the tone for the week. The theme of the conference was 'Possessing the Promises', based on the Israelite conquest of Canaan outlined in the book of Joshua.

Throughout the entire week we had some great times of worship with a nice mix of musicians and singers from Canberra, Mittagong and Mt Gambier.

Tearing oneself away from the buffet breakfast on Tuesday was difficult, but worth it to hear Hanna Fakhouri's message on 'Entering the land':

The call for the 21st century is to go back to the WORD of God. The law must be in our heart. As much as we need to have confidence in God we need to return to the Word of God. The law is an important step in entering into the land.

We need to make sure that all we hear aligns with the word of God. The word of God gives us the capacity to occupy the land, which equals changing people's lives.

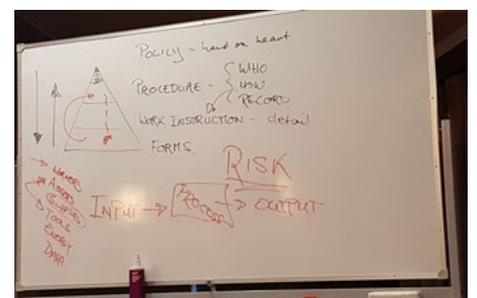
New NLT member Chris Whiting continued by contrasting the temptress of Proverbs 7 with the lady wisdom in Proverbs 8. Some points from his message:

Be careful of letting the meanings of words change, e.g. love. 'God loves you just the way you are — if that's the case, why did Jesus die on the cross? God does NOT LOVE US in our sinful state! Christ came to CHANGE us from who we are. Christ died because he can't stand us the way we were!

We present Christ as the solution, but we fail to present him as the problem. We must preach Christ our SAVIOUR but also Christ our LORD.

Founding apostle Peter Vacca gave an interesting and enlightening testimony of the history of Bethesda on Tuesday night, opening his extremely large and loving pastor's heart. He shared some of the pictures and visions he had previously seen for BMi, and provided renewed vigour for BMi's future.

After some wonderful fellowship well into the evening hours, the next morning was 'whiteboard Wednesday'. Chris Whiting explained to his smiling-and-nodding audience the ins and outs of child protection policy, and John Barnes gave a presentation



called 'How to save money by conducting your own funeral services in your church so you don't have to pay bucketloads of money to those regular funeral places.'

Shepherd Takayidza was unable to attend, so his session on 'the Cost of the Land' was undertaken (pardon the expression) by John Barnes:

God has provided at his own expense everything that we will ever need. We can't bring anything, or even deserve an invitation... BUT there is a COST. We have to put his agenda FIRST in our lives. Salvation is absolutely free, but at the same time it costs us our lives.

When we receive Christ's free offer, we make him master and ruler over our life. Many are happy to give their life to Christ but are not necessarily happy when he takes it!

As believers we must grow as disciples, and therein lies the cost.

Wednesday's free time gave delegates an opportunity to explore Launceston and the surrounding area, and it was also the day we began to hear from our international guests about their various ministries. We heard all the latest news from Joe and Primrose in the Philippines (and saw a great video featuring home-grown music from City Harvest Church), and several of the Indian pastors shared about their ministries (including Paul Dharmaveer who has a cable TV channel in India that reaches something like a million people).

In the Thursday sessions Peter Frogley began with 'Possessing the land'. Here are some snippets:

When we walk in obedience, God walks with us.

Much of the christian life is spent 'helping God'. Almost all troubles in ministry come when we do things 'mainly for God's glory'. God is not satisfied with 'mainly' — he wants ALL.

'You are not your own, you have been bought with a price' (1 Cor 6:19-20). You are a SON who is also a SLAVE — like Jesus, who only ever did what his Father told him to do.

After that Peter Vacca 'got his engineer' on and shared a neatly compartmentalised message on 'The two tribes on the other side'. PV had three things with which we need to be intimately acquainted with Christ: himself, his resurrection and his sufferings. These he followed up with the seven imperative and indispensable principles from Joshua chapter 1: Initiative, persistence, courage, obedience, discipline, vision and success.

Kevin Donohue continued Thursday's program, sharing from Joshua chapter 5. He exhorted us to 'kill the wordly cultures' that prevent us from possessing the land God has given us, and move into kingdom culture. It was about laying ourselves on the ground and seeing ourselves as on 'God's side', not seeing God on 'our side'.

After another sumptuous dinner we heard reports from the heart of Africa, courtesy of Dr Luc Mulimbalimba and William Ouma. Once again it was incredible to see and hear of things that are happening that are utterly reprehensible to us in our western culture — and yet get no media coverage. Even more amazing is the fact that these guys continue to trust God and take it all in their stride.

And just like that, Friday came along and it was suddenly the last day. We had a great time of commissioning and prayer followed by communion together, and then after lunch we were off to the airport and heading for home.

The NLG was a great opportunity to not just receive great teaching, but also to continue to build relationships, both within BMi Australia and internationally. Not only that, but the pastors who attended have I'm sure returned with refreshed vigour and vision for their own churches and BMi as a whole. Our thanks go to Kevin, Lyn and the staff at Tamar Valley Christian Church who bore the lion's share of the hospitality arrangements, and helped make it a definite week to remember.

John Garrard



When your kids think they own the place!

Every parent longs for the day when their children come to respect and appreciate what it means to be part of the family. Someone who is truly at home in a family moves with so much ease around the household that they seem to think that they own the place!

I saw exactly that at the NLG in Tasmania this year.

This year's Gathering saw the acceptance of Luke Mulimbalimba and William Ouma into the BMi fold as part of BMi Africa. Their being commissioned for this task was joyous enough in itself. It's always nice to see the family grow. But what was even more joyous was to overhear Pastor Joe Chavez of the Philippines welcome his African brothers into BMi with the words 'Welcome to the family.'

With such words I came to see how very real is the 'International' in Bethesda Ministries International. If the heartbeat of this movement is grace and mercy revealed via acceptance, then Pastor Joe has taken of the movement's heart as was at first tendered by Aussies and has ministered it anew to our African brethren. May God continue to grow us as BMi in all our international varieties, and may it be that we who have been around for a while will see others conduct themselves as though they own the place!

Thank you Joe. You are a blessing to more than just the Africans.

Chris Whiting

Philippines trip 2016

The annual pilgrimage to Bacolod in the Philippines by a team from TVCC was again held this year in April/May, with thirteen people taking the journey – nine from BMI and four others who sponsor our MPFG children.

Pastor Joe and Primrose again looked after us very well and team members had the opportunity to speak at a variety of churches on the Sundays.

One of our major events each year is MPFG annual graduation event. Because the number of people that are being ministered to by City Harvest Church has grown, we now need to hold at least four end of year graduations at a variety of slum or village locations around Bacolod, instead of gathering at CHC. What a powerful witness to the local people as we minister and congratulate participants and families, in the local village squares or basketball courts!

The realisation for me is that many of the leadership teams are young adults now, having come up through the discipleship programmes and the MPFG sponsorship programme. At 17–30-ish, many are not only supporting the ongoing work, but they are now breaking into new areas of outreach with feeding and ministry programmes.

Just as they were reached and touched, now they are sowing and reaping. How true and wonderful are the words: 'Freely you have received, freely give.' What is so special is that they don't get handouts for the food they provide – many of them make small craft items and other things that they sell for provision.

We went and participated in some of these programmes and it wasn't just the children getting ministered to, but an ever increasing number of adults and parents came to observe and listen.

Pastor Maureen Shepherd and her team of ladies were kept busy this trip with ministry to women and young mums. They also ministered into the lives of the pastors' wives and elders' wives at the mountain youth camp, where a number of them received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Our youngest team member Caitlin (14) was also sharing and ministering alongside the other women.

The youth camp in the mountain area is for kids twelve years old and upward, and was again well attended thanks to some generous donations and help from team members and from Australia. Over five days and four nights, intensive sowing of the word, ministry and fun was had by all (except for yours truly, who should

know better than to play basketball with 16–30 year olds).

Youth were bought together from the various BMI churches, with their leadership and also many of our MPFG slum youth

getting the opportunity to share in a totally different environment and relational experience.

The theme of the camp was about crossing over our Jordan into the promises of God and possessing the land.

What made this camp special was that a team of young BMI leaders from across the local churches put together the programme and the organisation – which meant Pastor Joe and Primrose could 'relax' (!!).

At the end of the camp, we had 25–30 young people who had come into the

saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and were baptised in one of the ravine rivers on the last morning of camp, including one of our Australian team members, Callum (17). The Lord opened his eyes and heart, leading his mum to comment that it was the best mother's day present she could receive. Amen to that!

We were there for three Sundays and each afternoon the team was asked to run discipleship training for the younger and older leaders. A special thanks to Noel and Beckie Eagling who accompanied us and gladly sowed into these training times.

Our devotion times each day were a joy with Noel and Gavin Steele from Scottsdale, who led us in worship with their guitars, with the sound echoing through the hallways of our hotel.

A special mention for Pastor Dave and Gervilyn King, and the way they received our team as family and invited us out for special meals because we are family with Joe and Primrose. Pastor Dave and Joe have connected in many areas of relationship, but one key area has been his help in discipling the many young people and families now part of CHC. Pastor Dave has seen the great relationship BMI Australia has with the Philippines church, and even though he is part of the Chinese Christian Church network, he desired to relationally connect with us and come to our National Conference to experience that relationship.

Our final event together was our Mother's day celebrations, where we always put something special on for the mothers and grandmothers in the slums and in the church, finishing up with a celebration lunch for Primrose, Maureen and a couple of their leadership wives.

As always, the hardest part is the goodbye, but made a little easier this year knowing that we would see some of the team again within the month.

Kevin Donohue

Just as they were reached and touched, now they are sowing and reaping

Filming through an Open Door

Once a month Open Door Christian Church holds a 'film club outreach' at the local cinema.

As it is an outreach designed for unchurched people, before each film is screened Pastor Chris Whiting produces a brief preview commentary on the film, giving Biblical perspective to the plot lines and exhorting viewers to think about more than just entertainment.

Chris has shared some samples of the flyers he has produced for the most recent season of films. Please note that this listing does not constitute any sort of promotion or recommendation for these films — Godly viewer discretion is always advised.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2

At the heart of our film is the question of what makes a marriage. At contrast is the formal aspect of the marriage union, the marriage licence, as against the relational expectation of love.

In some senses marriage as an expression of commitment amongst Australians is in decline. In 1990, 45% of Australians who got married in that year had been living together outside of marriage. By 2010 the figure was in excess of 75%. The proportion of people aged 20–29 years living in a de facto relationship has doubled since 1992. The rate for people aged 40–49 years has also nearly doubled during this time. ('De facto relationships' here being defined to include those living in a same-sex relationship. In 2010 there were around 46,300 people living as same sex couples.)

There seems an increasing ambiguity in our attitudes toward marriage. On the one hand we are ignoring it and on the other hand we seem unwilling to abandon it. Indeed the push for same-sex marriage suggests that

marriage is seen as the definitive expression of love and fidelity, yet overseas data for those countries which have legalized same-sex marriage suggests that only 10% of de facto same sex couples choose to marry.

Whilst our community views marriage as an expression of love, there is no equivalent notion in our existing legislation. There are four questions which the *Marriage Act* requires for marriage celebrants to put to a couple who are intending to wed. None of these seek to establish whether the couple love each other. As you watch tonight's film you might ponder what it is that makes a marriage — the letter of the law or the love of the heart — and what changes, if any, are appropriate to our existing legislation?

Hunt for the Wilderpeople

This film orients us to the longing of the adolescent heart for relationship and safety. Ricky, the focus of tonight's film, is a seemingly rebellious teenager, who yet possesses a sort of undefiled innocence.

Alas, innocence and safety seem something of a disappearing experience for our children. A 2011 study of 10,000 Australian students found that 40% of them worry too much and that 20% have had episodes of depression. The study found that the main difference now, compared to 10 or 20 years ago, is that today's children have increased access to media. Television, internet and mobile phones have contributed to the breakdown of barriers that protect children from crime, violence



and catastrophic events in media coverage. Cyber-bullying is another pervasive stressor often causing significant and serious emotional distress and harm to children.

Our media-saturated children are key targets for the commercialisation of their appetites as they are made unwitting participants in our consumerist ethic. Loss of innocence is also caused by our de-sanctification of sex and our glad recourse to violence in play, music and entertainment.

It is salutary to consider that Christ, who came to bring hope to men and women who are bound in stress and guilt, also sought to protect children. He cautioned that it would be better not to have been born than to 'offend on of these little ones' (Matt 18:10).

