

JUNE 25, 2020

S T E P B Y S T E P
ADVANCE
Tasmanian
BAPTISTS 



Have you ever pondered on the truth that “you are fearfully and wonderfully made”?

Every detail, from the power of your eye to sense colour, shade, depth, and movement – to your ability to “see”, think, learn, and connect with the Living God. What a magnificent creation you are!

This, and more, is the topic of **Michael Henderson’s** new podcast *Recapturing Wonder: A Faith Memoir*. You can read more about it on the Tas Baptists News page.

This week is special too, because you can discover **Jenna Blackwell’s** inner musings as she writes about her world, and world-reflections.

As well, **Stephen Baxter** conducts an exclusive video interview with **Mary Dickins** of Fostering Hope; **Cathie Staunton** tells of life in Cambodia; and there’s a special COVID-19 survey for **Young Adults**.

So much to read . . . just as well those spectacular eyes of yours are fit for the job!

Blessings,
Jenny

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profile:

Our Youth Leadership Development Coordinator

Jenna Blackwell

In Brief I Am a:



Disciple. Daughter. Sister. Auntie. Friend. Mentor. Receptionist. Student. Pastor.

Sunrise admirer. Animal lover. Nature appreciator. Gardening enthusiast. Movie watcher. Puzzle completer. Health wannabe. Friend focused. Coffee abstainer. Tea and chocolate fanatic. Cycling novice. Sunset fanatic.

What I Do

For Tasmanian Baptists, I'm employed as the Youth Leadership Development Coordinator. Really, this is a fancy title to say that I get to invest in the lives of young people and represent the voices of our younger generations across the state.

Most of my time is focused on mentoring and coaching young people, which is what I love doing most. I really enjoy journeying with people as they discover more about how they are wired, what they are passionate about, what frustrates them, and who God is and the relevance of God in their lives. It is such a privilege to journey with people.

I meet with pastors wherever possible, and I'm involved in the Tasmanian Baptist Union conversations and strategic planning, as well as conferences. I also communicate with children, youth and young adult State Coordinators across the nation as part of the Australian Baptist Youth Ministries (ABYM) team. We are currently working on a few things, but more on that later.

What Else I Do



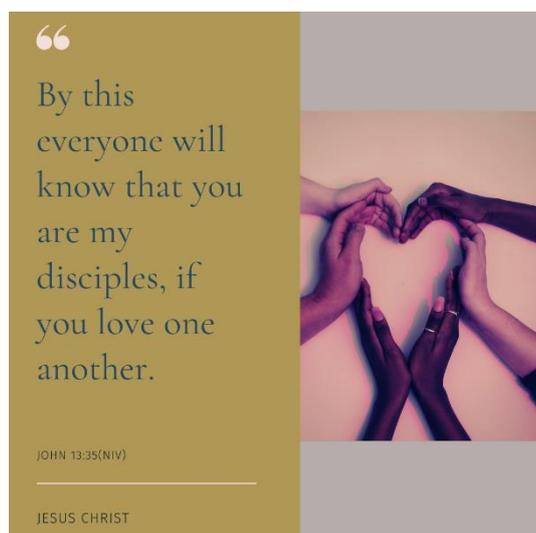
Outside of Tas Baptists, I work as a medical receptionist (going on 9.5 years). It's often crazy busy, especially due to COVID-19. I generally love it though, as it's a real opportunity to follow Christ in the workplace, among the staff and patients.

As part of my reception role, I coordinate the admin for our refugee health program, in which we see 25% of newly arrived refugees each month for their first 4-6 months in Launceston. I am blessed to work with a very wise Christian doctor in this program, and we aim to care holistically for the people we encounter. It is a great privilege to welcome people to our country in this way - to be a safe place and safe people - and it has confirmed my desire to interact with people from other cultures more.

I completed [Arrow Leadership](#) in 2019, which has resulted in some amazing friendships and I am continuing with a Bachelor of Ministry part time. These have provided me with an opportunity to volunteer with Arrow Leadership International Development (See [ALID on Facebook >>>](#)). This year we had planned to work with locals in another country, helping them develop their own Arrow Leadership program. Unfortunately, this has been postponed due to COVID-19, but we will soon begin coaching some of the current participants in the Philippines and Indonesia in the meantime (virtually, of course).

I also recently became an accredited strengths coach through [Strengths Network South Pacific](#) (SNSP), which utilises Gallup's [CliftonStrengths](#) tool. This has been really useful in mentoring adults and young adults, and I would love to practice this more within our network.

I Have Some BIG Questions!



Loneliness in society. I wonder - how do we do local community so well, that everyone is truly welcomed, valued, appreciated and has a sense of 'belonging,' regardless of relationship status, belief, gender, sexual orientation or employment status?

Intergenerational community. In relation to the above, how do we, the Church, do life with each other in ways that not only resemble the Kingdom of God, but respect and welcome other generations?

The future of the Church. In particular, the Baptist movement. How do we become young, and how do our local churches embrace required changes so that there are communities of believers for the children of our young people, and those lost in our society?

Undergirding all of this are two key themes/questions:

If "revival begins with personal renewal" ([Mark Savers](#)), what does that personal renewal look like for individuals? How can we empower people to pursue God more, and at what cost to themselves are people willing to live for God? ([Matthew 16:24-26](#)).

Will the world know that we are disciples of Jesus Christ by the love that we show to each other (inside and outside our gatherings)? ([John 13:35](#)).

What I continue to learn is that people are unique ~ plans change ~ change is good ~ good is a result of grace ~ grace is amazing ~ **God deserves the glory.**

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news:

Recapturing Wonder Podcast



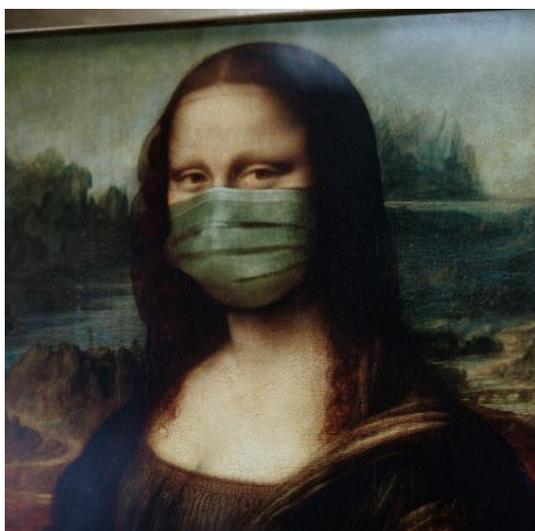
Tasmanian Baptists Leadership Coordinator Michael Henderson has begun a weekly podcast.

He says it is a podcast about the mess and joys I experienced as I recaptured wonder for my life and God and everything else.

It is a memoir about how I let go of faith, limits and control, and find a world beyond what I had previously experienced, known and even imagined. And began to live a wonder-full life with God.

[Check out Michael's podcast HERE >>>](#)

Young Adults Survey - Australian Baptist Youth Ministries



The ABYM taskforce has developed a survey to explore the impact on COVID-19 on young adults in our churches. The survey is intended for church leaders especially and will help the development of helpful bespoke resources for our national Baptist movement. The taskforce would appreciate your support in promoting the survey through your networks.

The taskforce has provided the following the introductory comment:

We have heard stories about the environment surrounding young adults, ranging from 18 to 25 end Gen Zs), due to COVID-19 and the effect on their engagement with local churches. The ABYM team are seeking to compile some data to link to anecdotes.

This survey is one step forward in bringing clarity to what is happening in the young adult space, together with further follow-up conversations, with the desire to create a helpful, bespoke resource for our Baptist movement across Australia.

To fill in the survey go to: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ABM_YA_Survey

GIA Strategic Mission Week

The Global Interaction state team would love to invite you to the first ever online Strategic Mission Week.

This five-day course is for anyone keen to explore the 'why' and 'how' of cross-cultural mission alongside passionate students, pastors and mission practitioners.

This is a short course for anyone keen to explore the 'why' and 'how' of contextual mission, both globally and locally. It provides an engaging, challenging and dynamic learning space where stories, interaction and reflection are key. This course is perfect for anyone who wants to understand the mission of God, discern a call for mission or develop skills for ministry.

ADVANCE, STEP BY STEP | 25 JUNE 2020

[Download brochure \(3MB\) >>>](#)

More Info: www.globalinteraction.org.au/SMW

Watch video: <https://vimeo.com/422275410>



Mission Leadership Summit

imagine.

When: Tuesday, July 28. 10am-4pm

Where: Riverlands Longford (assuming we can meet in person), in regional small groups (if we can only meet in groups under 10), or zoom (if everything goes belly up)

This summit exists to develop mission and discipleship in the Tasmanian local church. The talks and discussions we have gathered reflect this.

- It is more than inspiration: It is discussing how to make it happen on the group in your local context.
- That is what we hope you go home with: Ways to create kingdom fruit through your local church.

[Click for More information >>>](#)

<https://www.tasbaptists.org.au/mission-leadership-summit---july-2020/article=277>

serving others:

Loving | Praying | Serving

Here is your opportunity to support the state's most disadvantaged demographic: children requiring foster care.

Mary Dickins, Coordinator of [Fostering Hope](#) explains what you can do in this interview with Tasmanian Baptists Mission Director, *Stephen Baxter*.

[WATCH >>>](https://youtu.be/-3Wyxt6oS3g) <https://youtu.be/-3Wyxt6oS3g>



mission update:

The Staunton Family, Cambodia

Despite all that is going on in the world, over the last couple of months we are pleased to have had the chance to put down some roots here in Cambodia in order for us to be able to branch out in the near future.

[Check the Staunton's Facebook page >>>](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/stauntonsincambodia>

[Support Andy and Cathie >>>](#)

<https://support.globalinteraction.org.au/pages/cross-cultural-workers/cambodia-andyandcathie>

[Watch the video:](#)

<https://vimeo.com/422276677>



The Mystery Fruit!

It has been very exciting over the past month to settle into our new home. Our house is on a small plot of land carved out of surrounding rice fields. As with most Khmer houses we have no backyard but a front driveway, small garden and front patio. Khmer people do most of their living in these kinds of spaces where it is often cooler than inside. Cooking and eating is almost always done outside.

Subsequently life becomes quite communal as life occurs in sight of the rest of the neighbourhood. One of my favourite things to do is to sit on the front porch, particularly with a morning coffee, and watch the life around me.

Cows wandering past on the way to pasture, a Khmer lady selling breakfast noodles from the back of her bike, last night's dishes being washed, a house rapidly being built across the road, children buying drinks from the local drink stand, motorbikes coming back from market laden with the days

supply of fruit and vegetables and a couple of ice coffees hanging from the handle bars, nearby fields being ploughed and smaller plots of dirt being planted out in perfect rows of seedlings.

We are thankful that our landlord planted a small patch of grass in our front yard and a collection of fruit trees, including a mango, longan and pomegranate tree. She also put compost on our trees that are now growing well.

One morning when I was watering and watching and drinking coffee I noticed a small vine growing from the compost at the bottom of our new tree. Thinking it was a cucumber vine I was excited to train the baby vine up our ugly wire fence to create a vertical garden. To my delight, with the tropical humidity and rains my vine grew rapidly.

The kids watched expectantly as small fruit began to form, until one day a neighbour came and asked why I was growing a watermelon vine on my fence and not on the ground! I explained I thought it was a cucumber plant. But by this time, it was too late, the whole village was laughing at my gardening prowess and my vine was firmly wrapped around my fence!

Later on that day she came with little hammocks she had made for my baby watermelons to sit in so their weight would not break my vine. We are now all excited for that first watermelon to be ready so we can cut it up and share it with our new neighbours!

This is our place in TaChek Village



We are blessed to have been able to find a house to live in long term which suits our family's needs in an area 15 minutes out of town. Our flat roofed house has a rooftop where we can sit in the late afternoons to catch the breeze and watch the storm clouds roll in. As we enter the wet season after the hottest months in Cambodia we are so glad to receive rain!

School is still closed!

In early March all schools in Cambodia were closed due to Covid-19. While there have only been a small number of cases of Covid reported here, the Government is concerned about a second wave and has announced schools will remain closed until November when the Khmer academic year begins.

Our kids have been learning online and are doing considerably well, however it has meant they have been unable to develop more than just few friendships here. On the flip side there are many children who live and play in our street who we encourage them to engage with.

Prayer Points

- As we gain more understanding of our context and the Khmer language we are hoping our Gardener, our faithful God, will nurture and hold us up as we branch out to those around us. We are unsure of the fruit that may be germinating right now as we ask God, what do you want for us here? How could you possibly use us?
But we pray that the Spirit will faithfully guide and sustain us and those we live amongst as we commit to reflect and act and wait for the mystery fruit to grow. Feel free to join us in this prayer!
- Please pray that Charlie, Ruby and Hugo can find ways to connect with their new neighbours, despite language barriers.
Please also pray for Khmer children who have no access to online learning and for the education system here, that it can find ways of educating Cambodian children, despite its lack of resources, during this time.
Our kids attend international school so will began the summer break recently. The hope is that International Schools will be able to open in August at the start of their academic year.

Please know that you are all in our thoughts and prayers as things slowly return to a new kind of normal in Australia. Take Care!

Big Blessings,
Andy, Cathie, Charlie, Ruby and Hugo

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