



LASTING IMPACT ANNUAL REPORT 2017



TO SEE OUR CITY NATION AND THE NATIONS BECOME DISCIPLES OF JESUS

LOVING
GOD

LOVING
PEOPLE

DISCIPLES THAT
MULTIPLY



SENIOR PASTOR'S NOTES

In this report you will once again read about the activity of God. As a Church we believe that the mission of God is in the hands of ordinary people. It is an everyone effort and by the grace of God extraordinary things continue to happen. I have no greater joy than hearing about someone who has come to the point of putting their trust in Jesus. In 2017, 430 people took that step of faith and their lives will never be the same.

In this report you will read of the expansion of the Kingdom of God in people's hearts and the growth of the Church as a result. We have been seeking to learn from Jesus about the simple art of making Disciples that Multiply. We operate with a very simple paradigm of discipling a person towards conversion rather than converting a person towards discipleship. Jesus is our example of this because he did not begin with Christians. Rather he took an ordinary group of people and invited them into his life. Through them we have experienced the lasting impact that has changed the world for two millennia.

At Crossway through a combination of invitation and challenge we seek to encourage each other towards giving ourselves to the advancement of the

Kingdom of God. Our vision reaches well beyond our own walls to the city, nation and nations. We commit ourselves to assist people who are in tough places and nearly 1000 lives were touched through LifeCare in 2017. COACH has continued to expand rapidly across the nation and appears to only be gaining momentum. COACH is a world best practice model which with time will re-landscape the way that Australian churches engage with people in need.

Our Generational ministries, we call them G3, have continued to grow and influence the way that the Church and parents partner together for the discipleship of children. Significant growth has taken place in Kidspace and Youth and the culture of faith and passion is palpable in these domains.

Collectively we continue to build a discipling culture at Crossway and there is plenty of room for growth within our own ranks. We are taking this initiative across the nation with our faith target of seeing 10% of the Australian Church participating in a two year experience that we call a learning community. This is part of our longer term commitment to our nation.

By the grace of God and the generosity of the people of Crossway the finances

of 2017 reflect a strong position. There was a great response in term four after things were looking challenging later in term three. This has allowed us to continue with the expansion of usable space under the chapel and the ongoing renovation downstairs. It will be very exciting to see the new family cafe and open space open downstairs in 2018.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of Team Crossway, the Board and every person who gives of themselves so freely for the glory of God. We collectively believe that God is in the process of calling us towards making a Lasting Impact in our nation and beyond. May we by faith push forward into all that God has in store for us. These are great days of opportunity in our nation and we look to the future with confidence.

Be encouraged as you read this report!

DALE STEPHENSON
SENIOR PASTOR

FIRST TIME COMMITMENTS

I was born into a Buddhist and ancestor worshipping family. We even became Taoists, actively worshipping deities at a temple every weekend. Personally, I also believed in God. I was exposed to the Bible only during secondary school, and later encountered Jesus several times in my adult life. I was however like the seeds in Jesus’ Parable of the Sower.

I was the seed that was sown along the path as I didn’t understand the message about the Kingdom; the seed that was sown on rocky ground as I didn’t have roots to thrive. And I was the seed that was sown among the thorns as I was choked by the worries of this life.



ERICA

God did not give up on me, and is gracious, loving, faithful and forgiving despite my insecurities, doubts and many failed attempts at growing. God had various friends sow seeds in my life multiple times. He continues to place close friends, strong in the Christian faith, in my Christian journey, to cultivate and help further my growth.

There was a time when I almost gave up on Jesus. I was deeply troubled about who Jesus is, and prayed to God for an answer. Within the next couple of days whilst I was praying to my amazement I saw a monk, dressed in full garb. The following words were highlighted on his bag: “Jesus is the only God.” Months later, God arranged for me to ‘bump’ into the same monk again, allowing me to see all the words clearly: “Jesus is the only God there is.”

This sign from Jesus also helped me resolve a conundrum I’ve had since young. I thought the many gods and deities in the world were adapted for different cultures but were ultimately pointing to the same God. But now I know “Jesus is the only God there is.”

One of my best friends accompanied me to Alpha in term 2 of 2017, which helped establish my foundational roots and understanding of Christ. In my pursuit of knowledge of God and whether He actually exists, I experienced His love for me through the intimacy of community with people who call themselves Christians. I accepted Jesus into my heart during the Alpha weekend away.

430
FIRST TIME COMMITMENTS

BAPTISMS



As a kid, I went to church with my mum. Stories about Jesus and the teachings of the Bible were things I grew up hearing but I didn’t think that much about it; it felt a bit like learning a subject at school - head knowledge.



In year four, a friend invited me to attend “Kids Church” which was the “Kidspace” at the time. One week, the preacher invited people who wanted to accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour to stand up. I sat there, heart pounding, thinking of all the reasons why I didn’t want to stand up. But I decided to stand up and when I did, I felt this massive relief and peace - I knew it was what I needed and wanted

to do. From that point, head knowledge of the God in the Bible became the start of a relationship with the living God.

That took place more than 15 years ago just downstairs. Looking back, even as a year four kid, I understood the significance of what Jesus did for me on the cross. There have been many times where I have forgotten about God but every time he reminds me of his immense love for me. Just as I knew that day when I stood up from my chair, I know today that getting baptised is what I need and want to do. So, by being baptised today, I’m saying that I have a relationship with God through what Jesus did for me and I will follow Him for the rest of my life.



CARMAN

203 BAPTISMS



LIFE GROUPS

When we were a newly-wed couple, we had no kids and were free and easy! Why wouldn't you serve when you have that much free time? I was an active member of the Crossway Media Team, and my wife and I co-led and facilitated a Life Group in our home. It was a joyous time. However, God blessed us with two amazing children, and suddenly our life became busy... very busy. I retired from the Media Team, and we stopped co-leading our Life Group. Over time, our Life Group disbanded, with the members joining singles-specific groups.

For seven years we regularly attended

Church, but we were not in a Life Group, and not serving in any capacity. We were present but effectively disconnected from the Crossway Community. Life seemed to always be "too busy" to consider re-joining and re-connecting.

All of that changed when one of the Life Group pastors encouraged us to consider joining a new Life Group, one that matched our life-stage. He lead us through several options, and finally we joined a new group of families at a similar stage to our own. It didn't stop there, reconnecting back into the Crossway Community meant we were challenged personally to reconsider our

WARREN AND PING

apparent inability to serve. As a result, I joined the Crossway Writing Team, and my wife has also started to help the LifeCare ministry by sourcing second-hand whitegoods for those in need.

By joining into a new Life Group, we have tapped back into the life blood of God's body, the Church. He is both encouraging and challenging us to continue in our journey as we serve at Crossway.

246
LIFE GROUPS

MISSIONAL COMMUNITIES

TIM It always amazes me just what draws people together.

I've been driving Jeeps since the late 1990s and found kindred spirits in the Melbourne Jeep Owners' Club. We bond over driving our jeeps in and out of the various state forests of Victoria and interstate. There is nothing like overcoming obstacles together. Some may regard the entire idea of climbing over big rocks and deep bog holes filled with mud foolhardy or crazy but it brings us together.

A few years ago, a few of us who are followers of Christ started chatting about how we could start combining our love of Jeeps and Christ's Great Commission. We decided to see how we could reach out to members of the club for Jesus. All of a sudden, we found ourselves with a missional purpose.

Two years down the track, a bunch of us meet at intervals for breakfast

at McDonalds. The space is highly relational and membership is by invitation only. We invite people who are members of the Jeep club. Over breakfast we chat about our cars and what we've done to them, often laughing about their pitfalls. Often, faith is discussed and it could be as easy as sharing a point of inspiration.

The group has travelled through a number of life's ups and downs. We've become great friends and grown in relationship with Jesus. Those who do not yet know Christ are more accepting of having conversations and not fussed when challenged about the prospect of eternity. It works both ways as everyone gives as much as they get.

We look forward to staying the journey and know that we'll have lots of fun along the way, filled with big Jeeps, chunky tires, the smell of mud in the bush and Christ as our compass.

4 NEW MISSIONAL
COMMUNITIES

17
MISSIONAL COMMUNITIES

ATTENDANCE FINANCE & NOTICEABLE GROWTH IN MINISTRIES

6,864 **OVERALL ATTENDANCE**
↑3% (measured by average weekly physical and online attendance of all events including Easter and Christmas period attendees)

4,496 **EASTER PERIOD ATTENDANCE**
↑29%

3,806 **CHRISTMAS PERIOD ATTENDANCE**
↓24%

NOTICEABLE GROWTH IN MINISTRIES

(measured by average weekly event attendance)

82 ↑50%
INDONESIAN CONGREGATION
BURWOOD EAST AND SOUTH EAST

189 ↑16%
MANDARIN CONGREGATION

341 ↑21%
YOUTH

72 ↑4%
KOREAN CONGREGATION

225 ↑2%
CANTONESE CONGREGATION

2,672 ↑3%
CHURCH ONLINE

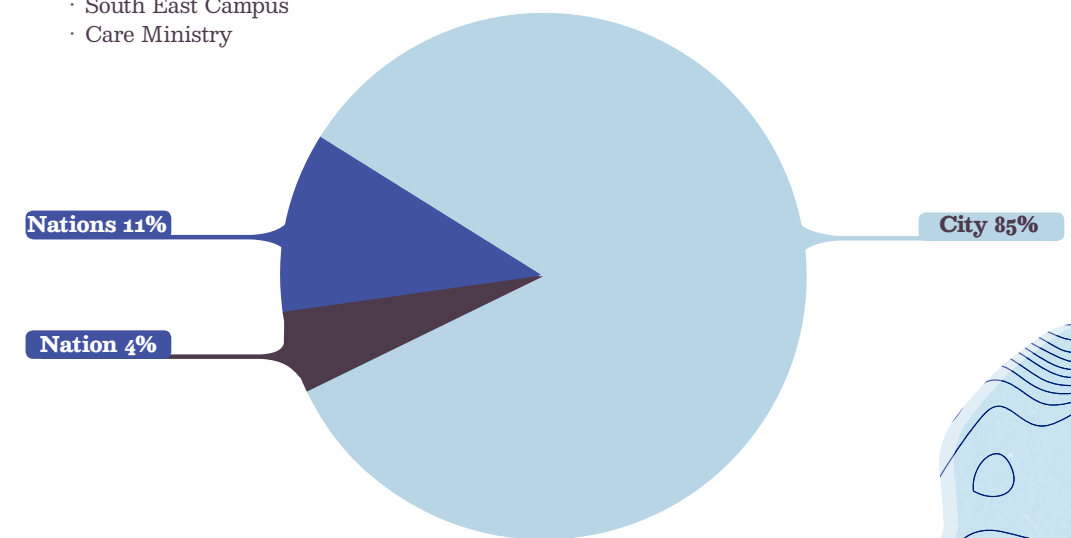
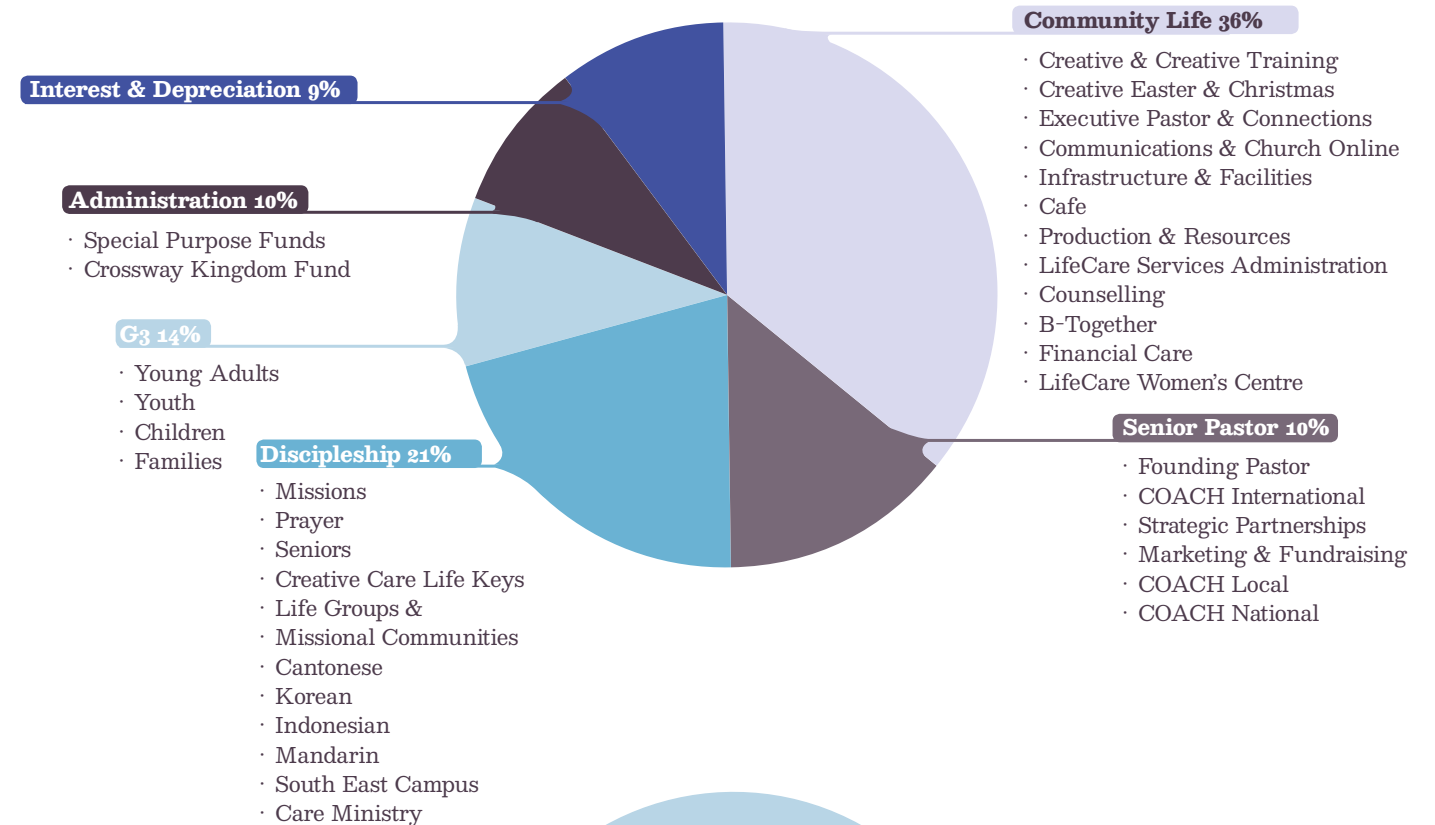
96 ↑8%
YOUNG ADULTS

2,274 ↑2%
ENGLISH CONGREGATION

60 ↑2%
CONNECT WORSHIP

842 ↑1%
KIDSPACE

FINANCES



\$11,052,593 **TOTAL REVENUE**
↑14%

\$114,235 **AVERAGE WEEKLY TITHES**
↑4%



TEAM CROSSWAY

BRUCE

In the winter of 2017, a couple of connections ministry people started chatting about how we could get Crossway's carpark ministry up and running.

It was going to be a logistical nightmare, with three morning services in the auditorium, close to a thousand children in Kidspace and three Asian services running in the chapel at the same time as the English ones. Each service had a turn around time of just eighty minutes. We had already seen casualties in the car park, with a child run over, many near misses and folk circling with their cars and leaving when unable to find a spot.

Knowing there was no perfect plan, we chose a course of action and went for it. It was always going to be a ministry where there would be criticism and where human nature would be at its worst. We went about recruiting on the basis of articulating a clear vision above the task.

The vision was to bless our church community. By making it easier for them to find a spot, they would, hopefully, find inspiration to worship and hear from God when entering the auditorium.

What a blessing it is to be out and about in the carparks and just be so encouraged by the comments and friendly waves we get from pedestrians

and drivers alike. It's also so awesome to work with such a committed group of guys and girls as they give up a Sunday morning a month to minister within their church community.

The ministry has now grown to eight teams, covering the weekend services. What a privilege it is to serve alongside a magnificent team. Since launching in July 2017, I'm happy to say that I feel such a sense of community with new found friendships and the privilege to lead by serving as Jesus did.

1680
TEAM MEMBERS IN
SERVICE

INCLUDING 637 NEW PLACEMENTS

102 1971
NEW MEMBERS TOTAL MEMBERS

MEMBERSHIP

"AS FOR ME
AND MY
HOUSE, WE
WILL SERVE
THE LORD."

-JOSHUA
24:15

My name is Yvonne and I have been attending Crossway with my family for over a year. We arrived in Melbourne three years ago and searched for a church we could call our faith home.

Life wasn't easy as a migrant. I went through bouts of melancholy and self-doubt, constantly questioning the decision to move from Singapore. God is always merciful, gracious and abundantly patient. He constantly reminds me of His great love

and provides answers which affirm our move to Melbourne. We are in Crossway at the right time. My family and I have come to trust Him in all that we do and to allow Him to work through us in all our inadequacies.

As a family, my husband Pierre, children Charlotte and Olivier and I were baptised by full immersion on Christmas Eve as a step of obedience and expression of our faith in Christ, and also to indicate our trust in a God who has our best interest in mind.

YVONNE

We've applied to be members of Crossway. It'll be here that God will use our giftings to further His Kingdom and beyond.





MISSIONS

MARK

I met Kolya sixteen years ago in a rural town in southern Belarus. He had just become the youth leader at his church with a youth group of eight teenagers. I saw something in him so invited him to our annual youth camp. I guess I was drawn to his obvious love for teenagers and infectious smile. Kolya had a light that shined from him. He was not like other youth leaders who were more sombre and serious.

He came to camp and loved it. You could see him taking note mentally of everything we did. I found out a few months later that he just started replicating the stuff we did on camp with his small youth group. I headed down to his town to catch up with him and teach him the fundamentals of youth work. Kolya was amazing and absorbed the teaching like a sponge.

His target group was youth and he wanted to know how to get them to come to church. I said you need to make friends first and establish good trusting

relationships with them. So Kolya would hang around the school at the end of the day's classes and see where the youth went. Some students went home and some went to the shops, but many went to the local soccer field.

At first from a distance he thought the ball looked odd. It did not roll well and didn't go very far after being kicked. He got closer and saw it was a ball of rolled up jumpers. They didn't even have a soccer ball. So Kolya went and bought one. He became an instant hero. They started opening up to him as they kicked the ball around. He invited them to youth group. In a short time he had over thirty teenagers attending youth group activities. He saw a need and when given the tools was able to meet that need.

Early in 2017 Kolya announced to the Young Life leadership team that he was going to run his own camp. It wasn't a brash or jealous statement. He was thinking strategically. The town he is from is not wealthy so many teenagers were

unable to go to the Young Life camps in the capital because of costs. So, if they cannot go to camp, bring camp to them. He hoped and prayed for forty teens to attend. In the end, twenty-five teenagers came to their first camp down near the Ukrainian border - a huge success.

But it was strategic from another angle. Kolya was thinking of his audience. Teenagers are teenagers but the variations in life experiences from the city to the country were vast. Kolya was able to use rural language to clearly communicate the gospel.

With youth group bursting at the seams and Kolya now employed as the Youth Pastor, he has embarked on another journey in the lives of teenagers in the town. Every time they meet he takes the opportunity to teach them how to reach their classmates with the gospel. He teaches them to then teach the new converts how to do it. Now that is something to get excited about.

4 MISSIONARIES COMISSIONED
AND SENT OUT

74
MISSIONARIES SUPPORTED

90
NEW BELIEVERS

25
NEW GROUPS

46
BAPTISMS

65
TOTAL GROUPS

PRAXEIS

Andrew and Mindy Pyman and their team are ministering in the Western suburbs of Sydney with Praxeis. Recently the Pyman family moved into a new neighbourhood with the largest Catholic community in Australia.

The Pymans and the West Sydney team started to pray for the local residents and after prayer walking and gaining a better understanding of the suburb and its needs, God showed the team an access ministry of ESL (English as a Second Language) to connect with locals from the area. Meaningful and spiritual conversations started to develop with those from the ESL class at the local library.

Soon Andrew found himself connecting further and starting to pray after the class with an Iraqi Catholic called Nabo. Nabo started to

invite Andrew to meet and open the Bible with his extended family in different houses across the neighbourhood. It was clear that Nabo was the kind of person the team had been praying for; someone who was open to friendship, spiritually hungry for God and who shared what they were learning with others in their family and wider community.

Today, twelve months on, Nabo has a heart to see his Catholic community become disciples of Jesus. As Andrew and the team disciple Nabo, he continues to attend his Catholic church on Sundays but only so he can find others who want to join his weekly Discovery Bible meeting in his home. In his words, Nabo prays for and dreams of seeing an 'Injil inteshaar' (Gospel movement) amongst his Chaldean Iraqi people that would multiply through his one thousand-odd extended family network and back into Iraq and the nations to which this

ANDREW
AND
MINDY



DISCIPLES THAT MULTIPLY

EDEN

Wis and I met our long lost friend, Claire from Hong Kong (the city I originate from), after a Sunday service at Crossway two years ago. She had moved to Australia and married Andrew here a few years later. Andrew was not a believer but was keen to join our Life Group along with his believing wife. Noticing he regularly attended the group and Sunday service, I saw no reason why I should not approach him to start studying the Bible together so I asked, "Are you interested in reading the Bible with me?"

This simple invitation started an almost year long journey where I saw struggles and victories at different times. Usually we read a few scriptures, found out what they meant and then applied the principle to our life, which took around an hour.

After about ten studies and with lots of prayer, encouragement and love from the Life Group, he finally decided to join the ranks of God's army (Luke 14:32) and was baptised a year later.

Five months later, Andrew invited the whole Life Group for a BBQ at his new home along with all his neighbours, with the intention of reaching out to them.

I was so encouraged not only because of the sizzling steak and Coopers but all the more for seeing him grow into a fisher of men within such a short time.

There is no single or best way to water the seed and help people grow but surely opening the scriptures and letting the Word of God serve as double edged sword (Hebrews 4:12) is one of the shortcuts to carrying out our mission as fishers of men (Mark 1:17). It is an honour, not a burden, to take part in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19) and introduce Jesus to a pre-Christian. To God be the glory.

97 NEW DISCIPLES

"Looking back, if it weren't for LifeCare I would have had a breakdown and then only God knows what would happen to me and my children. I'm now enrolled in further studies and look forward to full-time work"

- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVOR



LIFECARE

The LifeCare team made a great impact on those struggling in our community in 2017. The support and care provided by LifeCare through counselling, mentoring, financial and practical care has meant that nearly 1000 people have been given the opportunity to heal from brokenness, work towards life goals, join in with healthy community and experience the love of God.

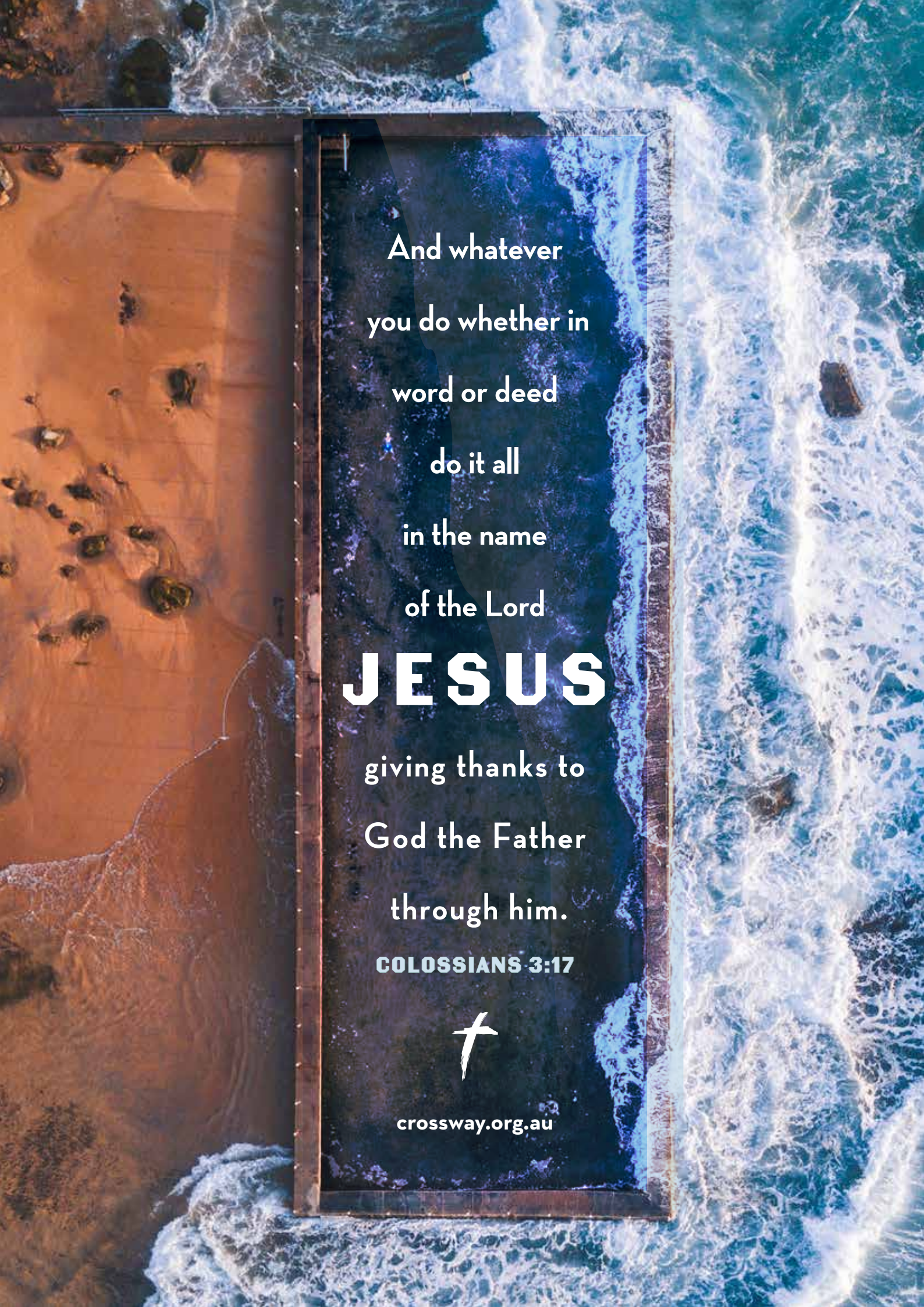
Our community meals program has doubled in size and has been a huge blessing to so many who otherwise wouldn't have a caring community to connect with. Many of our LifeCare participants are now serving as team members in this space. Our voluntary team has also grown substantially (by 35%) as the blessing of giving seems to be contagious!

Our growth and impact statistics are encouraging because they represent so much more than numbers. They represent real people and families who, having come from challenging circumstances that many of us could never imagine, are now flourishing. The real success comes from the amazing people who have had the courage to come forward for help and the dedicated LifeCare staff, team members, and financial supporters who have given sacrificially of their time and resources to make this transformation possible. We could not do what we do without the combined effort, generosity and prayer support of those who share our heart for those in need in our community!

970
PEOPLE STRUGGLING IN OUR
COMMUNITY WERE TRANSFORMED
THROUGH HOPE, HEALING AND CARE

48 NEW TEAM MEMBERS

12 FIRST TIME COMMITMENTS



And whatever
you do whether in
word or deed
do it all
in the name
of the Lord

JESUS

giving thanks to
God the Father
through him.

COLOSSIANS 3:17



crossway.org.au