



WOLLONGONG
BAPTIST CHURCH

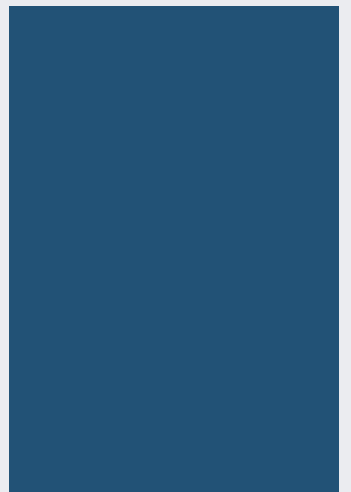
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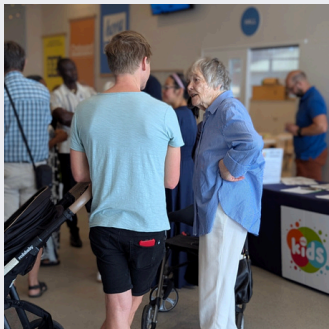


2026

ANNUAL REPORT

TO KNOW CHRIST AND TO MAKE HIM KNOWN





A LETTER FROM THE Senior Pastor

Following Jesus Together



Looking Back

As we look back over the past year, we have much to thank God for. Last year we identified two particular priorities for our church: strengthening our care for one another and deepening our engagement in mission. By God's kindness, we have seen encouraging progress in both areas.

In care, we have taken some important steps towards becoming a church where we are better equipped to care for one another through all the seasons of life. We have revamped our prayer network, with around 50 people across the church now committed to praying when urgent needs arise. We have also relaunched our Care Team, with around 15 people serving to provide practical and pastoral care for those in our church who are in need. We have been able to provide practical help to people in need using the church's Care Fund. These initiatives build on the themes we explored together in our All My Days sermon series in August and September 2025, where we considered our responsibility to help one another follow Jesus through all the different stages and circumstances of life. It is encouraging to see those convictions taking practical shape in the life of our church.

We have also continued to grow in our engagement with God's mission. In February we hosted the Co:Mission young adults evangelism training event, equipping young adults to speak about Jesus with greater confidence and clarity. In March we supported the Alive evangelistic rally here in Wollongong, joining with other local churches to proclaim the good news of Jesus to our city. We have also increased our financial commitment to our mission partners in this year's budget, recognising that we have the privilege of partnering with gospel workers as they take the good news further afield. And we are looking forward to sending a team to Bangladesh in January 2027 on a short-term mission trip, while beginning to explore opportunities for future trips to serve alongside and encourage other mission partners in the years ahead.

None of these things are ends in themselves. They are expressions of our desire to be a church where we care for one another, make disciples and participate wholeheartedly in the mission of Jesus. We have much still to learn and much still to do, but we can look back with gratitude at the ways God has been growing us and giving us opportunities to serve Him.

Looking Forward

As we look ahead, we also want to think carefully about the longer-term future of WBC. We don't want simply to keep doing what we have always done, nor do we want to make changes for change's sake. Rather, we want to be driven by a passion for God's glory, wherever that leads us.

As the Elders have reflected and prayed about our future, one picture has become increasingly clear to us. Under God, we believe we should plan and aspire **to see our average Sunday attendance grow from around 500 today to around 1,000 over the next fifteen years.**

This aspiration is part of a wider conversation happening among many Reformed evangelical churches and ministries across Australia. There is a growing desire to pray and work towards seeing the number of gospel-centred Christians in Australia significantly increase over the next fifteen years. The language being used is "doubling": not because we think we can engineer the growth of God's church, but because we can pray boldly for God to save many more people through the faithful preaching of the gospel.

For us, this is not about building a WBC empire. It is not about having the biggest church, the biggest staff team or the most impressive facilities. It is about seeing more people in Wollongong come to know and love the Lord Jesus, for His glory.

So we want this to become something of a North Star for us: a long-term aspiration that helps us think about the decisions we make and the opportunities we pursue.

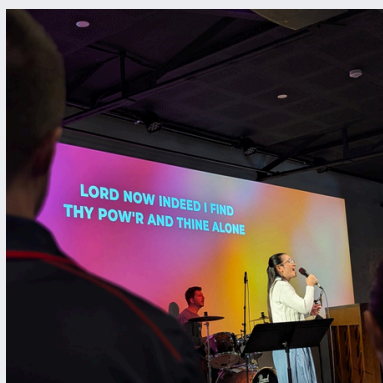
And at the heart of it is not a strategy but a prayer:

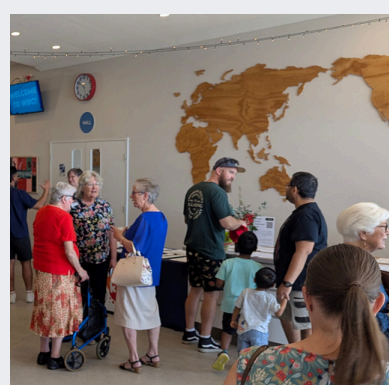
"Lord God, give Jesus 1,000 people who know Him, love Him and make Him known, Through us, for your glory."

That is a prayer we want to keep praying over the next fifteen years.

At first glance, doubling in fifteen years might sound like a lot. But it is actually a relatively modest rate of growth - roughly 5% compounded growth each year. Given that WBC has already doubled in considerably less time than fifteen years, and given that Wollongong itself is continuing to grow, it is not an unreasonable thing to pray for. Current projections suggest that the population of the Wollongong LGA could grow to almost 290,000 people by 2041.

But it is also an ambitious prayer. Doubling would not be business as usual. It would require us to embrace change, bear costs, pray fiercely and live courageously. Most importantly, it would require us to see people who currently do not know Jesus become





His disciples. As the wider Australian vision has recognised, conversion growth is the real goal, not simply Christians moving between churches. One of the most obvious implications is that we cannot simply keep adding people to our existing Sunday services indefinitely. With our current configuration of three English services at Keira Street, we have a practical ceiling of around 600 people on a Sunday. If we are serious about seeing the gospel reach more people, we need to plant churches.

That is why, under God, we are committing ourselves to a timeline of planting again by 2030, together with Calderwood Valley Baptist Church. This was always part of the vision we shared with CVBC when we planted that church in 2024. We want to see the fruit of that partnership continue by seeing our churches multiply.

That will require all of us to play our part. We need to pray for people to become Christians. We need to speak about Jesus and welcome people into our church. We need to serve, give, disciple and encourage. We are even beginning to imagine sending a team of up to 100 people to help plant the next church. For that to happen, WBC itself will need to grow substantially between now and 2030.

There are practical implications too. We are beginning to envisage appointing a church planter around 2028 or 2029. To make that possible, we need 83 Kenny Street to move from being a financial cost to becoming a

financial asset for gospel ministry. That is one reason why our Beyond These Walls campaign remains so important. We are deeply grateful for the extraordinary generosity that has already made the purchase of Kenny Street possible, and I want to encourage us to keep giving towards that goal.

The next fifteen years will undoubtedly involve changes and challenges that we cannot yet see. But that is part of what it means to trust God. We don't know exactly what He will do. We do know what we want to ask Him to do.

Lord God, give Jesus 1,000 people who know Him, love Him and make Him known, through us, for your glory.

And then, by His grace, we want to work and pray towards that end.

Focus for this year

There is an old saying that “a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” If our prayer is that, over the next fifteen years, through WBC God would give to Jesus 1,000 people who know Jesus, love Him and make Him known, what are the first steps we need to take?

Of course, we will continue doing the things that have always been at the heart of our church: proclaiming the saving news of Jesus, teaching God's Word, praying, gathering together, making disciples and caring for one another. But as we look at the

particular opportunities and challenges in front of us this year, there are two areas that especially require our attention.

The first is our ministry to children and young people.

We have some real space constraints on Sundays, but we also have an exciting opportunity to make better use of the space God has given us. We are currently renovating the backyard at Kenny Street to create an outdoor play and activity space. Our hope is that this will be ready as we come into spring and provide valuable space not only for our children's ministry, but also for youth and young adult ministry.

Beyond simply creating more space, we want to strengthen the pathways by which children and teenagers grow as disciples of Jesus. In particular, we want to encourage our youth to increasingly participate in our 6pm congregation and find opportunities to serve. We also want to strengthen the pathway from youth into our young adults community. We have seen significant growth among our young adults over the past couple of years, and we want to make the most of that opportunity by helping the next generation find a place to belong, serve and grow as followers of Jesus.

The second area is our relationship with our international congregations.

The Elders and Deacons are currently in the process of rewriting our church constitution, with the aim of bringing proposed changes to our November members' meeting, ahead of a vote in

February. One of the things this process gives us an opportunity to do is clarify the governance of, and our relationship with, the international congregations that are part of our church family.

Our desire is not simply to preserve the arrangements we have today. We want these congregations to flourish. We want them to continue having a strong gospel impact well into the future, and to be increasingly equipped to grow and serve the communities God has placed them in.

That means working with each congregation to think carefully about leadership, develop appropriate plans and set goals for faithful and fruitful ministry. We want to be a church family that doesn't simply provide a place for these congregations to meet, but actively works with them to help them become healthy, growing and multiplying expressions of the gospel.

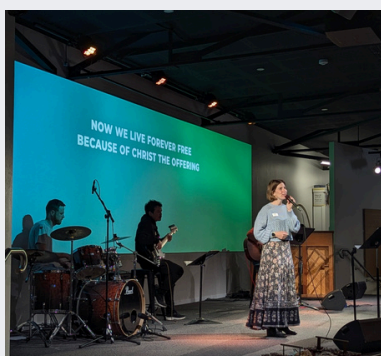
These may seem like relatively small steps alongside a fifteen-year vision. But this is how the work of gospel ministry happens: one person at a time, one conversation at a time, one disciple at a time, one ministry and one church at a time.

So as we take these next steps, let's keep praying our simple prayer:

Lord God, give Jesus 1,000 people who know Him, love Him and make Him known, through us, for your glory.

And let's trust Him to use our faithful steps, however small they may seem, to accomplish His purposes for His church.

*In Christ,
Mark Roberts*





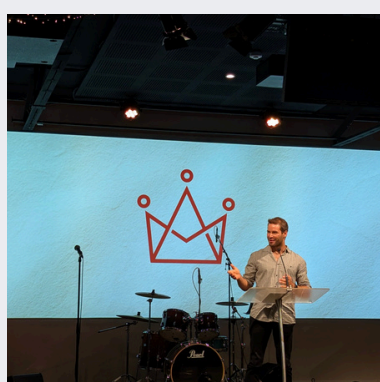
Magnifying Christ together in worship

What a joy it has been to gather together as God's people every Sunday to sing his praises and learn from his word! We've covered a lot of ground over the last year as we considered God's mercy in the book of Jonah, Jesus' Lordship in the book of Matthew, Christ's return in 1 Thessalonians, God's holiness in the book of Leviticus and how we can help each other follow Jesus, all our days, in our topical sermon series.

We've celebrated Easter and

Christmas together, and a very special new service was introduced in December for those grieving during the advent season. Our Blue Christmas service offered the hope and light of Christ, even in the midst of heartache and sorrow, and we are committed to making this lament service an annual part of our church calendar.

Over the past year, God has blessed us with an influx of new musicians, particularly in our morning services,





A story from Emma King

Sunday is the best day of the week for me. I get to go to church to fellowship with other believers and hear the preaching of the Word of God. I've loved all our series of preaching, but especially the most recent one the book of Leviticus. I was [already] grateful for what Jesus has done on the cross, but hearing the book of Leviticus preached, it opened my spiritual eyes; Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, His mercy, His grace, and His love, it makes my heart more grateful. And I'm more mindful of how to live my life - of being holy because God is holy.



and we are so thankful that he has raised up for us gifted singers and players to serve our church and help us sing wholeheartedly to the Lord.

readers, preachers, musicians, AV team, communion preparers and distributors, mission team and partners and all those who have shared in live interviews and on camera. It is a joy to see the body of Christ at work as we gather in his name and spur one another on!

We give thanks for all those who serve us during our Sunday gatherings - our Service leaders, Bible

BY THE NUMBERS



164

Services
proclaiming
God's word



6

Children
dedicated



6

People
baptised



426

Average
people
attending on a
Sunday

MISSION



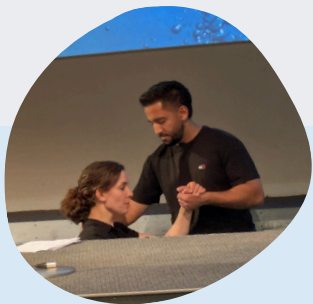
Making Christ known together for the gospel

We thank God for another year of seeing Him at work through the mission life of our church. Our desire continues to be to know Christ and make Him known, both in our local community and across the world.

Over the past year, we have had the privilege of partnering with 11 gospel mission partners, serving both locally and overseas. Through prayer, financial support, and regular encouragement, we have been able to share in their work of making Christ known among different communities and nations.

Locally, it has been encouraging to see people exploring the Christian faith through our evangelistic courses. Across our 321 and Discover courses since July last year, more than 20 people who did not yet know Jesus have attended to investigate the claims of Christianity. We praise God that four people professed faith in Christ during this period and we are looking forward to seeing what God continues to do through Discover. While only God gives the growth, it has been a great joy to witness lives being transformed by





A story about Neda Sawary

About eighteen months ago, Neda walked into our church looking for peace. Having grown up in Iran in a Muslim family, she knew very little about Jesus. We invited her to 321, and she came along by herself, eager to learn more. After completing the course, Neda joined the 321 Bible study and began bringing her husband, Ahmad, and daughter, Dahlia, to church. As they read the Bible and discovered who Jesus is, each of them came to put their trust in Him. Neda was baptised first, followed by Dahlia and Ahmad, a beautiful picture of God's grace transforming a whole family.

the gospel and to continue walking alongside many others who are still asking questions and exploring who Jesus is.

We are thankful for God's faithfulness over the past year and pray that He

would continue to raise up workers, strengthen our mission partnerships, and use our church to make the good news of Jesus known both here in Wollongong and to the ends of the earth.



BY THE NUMBERS

+

4

People who have put their trust in Jesus

🌐

11

Gospel mission partners

🗣️

16

Average attendance at English Classes

📖

29

People who have attended 321/Discover



Investing ourselves in gospel ministry

We give great thanks and praise to God for the many people who serve our church community. We are always encouraged to see the body of Christ working together, as our members use their gifts to serve one another for the building up of our church, to the glory of God.

The week-to-week ministry of our church is largely dependent on God's people serving one another in love in both formal and informal contexts. This year, we have been especially encouraged by the number of new people who have joined WBC and

committed themselves to serving formally alongside our longer standing members. God has been faithful in providing for our church through those who have stepped into serving over the last twelve months, and those who have stepped into larger roles carrying greater responsibility. It is a joy to see our people investing themselves in the work God is doing amongst us at WBC!

We remain a church that is committed to seeing disciples raised up for ministry, both within our





A story from Noah Skewes

Since I joined the church in April 2025, I have been incredibly encouraged and loved and have grown in ways I cannot even begin to fully appreciate. So many different things have contributed and continue to contribute to this growth, but one of these has been the joy, encouragement, and training I have received through volunteering at church.

Those who have led and supported me in these ministries have continually reminded me of where the focus ought to be: on God. They have shown me what a joy and privilege it is to serve Him and His people humbly, faithfully, and prayerfully, as vessels of His righteousness. What a joy this has been, and how helpful it continues to be in growing and shaping me as a member of God's one body, His church.

church and beyond. Over the last year, Sam Mahdavi completed his two-year Ministry Training Scheme (MTS) apprenticeship and has begun studying at Bible College. Additionally, both Ben Camilleri and Grace Jones formally graduated from Sydney Missionary and Bible College (SMBC), and there are members from our evening service who are prayerfully

considering future steps regarding both MTS and future study at Bible college.

Our prayer is that more and more people at WBC will give themselves to serving our church community, and that God would continue to raise up people to be equipped and trained to serve his people, wherever he calls them to go.



BY THE NUMBERS



201

People
serving
formally



25

New volunteers
this year



9

Team Leaders
raised up



3

People at
Mission Minded
to consider
ministry



Deeply embracing each other and the newcomer

Our Membership ministry centres on the truth that God has reconciled us to Himself, and to one another through Jesus. We seek to help each other commit in deep and meaningful ways through connection, community, and care. Growing our community in these areas happens in so many ways; through welcoming at the door, intentional and warm hospitality both at church and in our homes, through our Onboard course, and every moment that we do life

together. Since our last annual report, we have welcomed almost 550 visitors through our doors. There have been nearly 60 people that have decided to call WBC home and over 100 of us gathered at each other's tables across the Everybody Eats hospitality weekend.

We can only do this because of the 60+ volunteers that have committed to helping each of these ministries operate. We are so grateful to God for





A story from Ben Lettley

There's something special about opening our homes, sharing a table, and letting life slow down. Hosting for Everybody Eats was an absolute joy. There was laughter, incredible food, and the building of friendships.

Meeting outside our usual Sunday church setting gave us the space to ask deeper questions, and simply enjoy one another's company. Over shared meals and conversations, we discovered stories we'd never heard and made connections that go far beyond small talk in the foyer.

It's moments like these, gathering around a table, passing plates, and sharing our lives, that bring our church family closer together. I walked away with a full stomach, a full heart, and a deeper gratitude for the vibrant, beautiful family of WBC.



being at work through his people that choose to invest in their church by serving in the myriad of

ways that help our community demonstrate love to one other.

BY THE NUMBERS



58

New people who have joined WBC



534

Visitors welcomed



18

Homes used for Hospitality Sunday



47

People attended Onboard

MATURITY



Growing to be more like Christ

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. - Ephesians 4:15

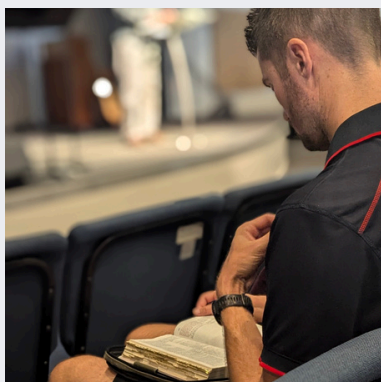
As followers of Jesus, we're all called to increasing maturity in the way we live for him. As a church, it's our joy to encourage one another to grow in our knowledge of Christ, deepen our love for God, and continue on in faithful discipleship.

Key to this, our Home Groups meet regularly to explore God's Word, pray, wrestle with practical implications, and share life together. Developing deep relationships and making spaces

where we can speak truth and love helps us all in the goal of becoming more like Jesus.

Alongside these gatherings, our church podcast, *Deeper*, provides listeners with the chance to go even further into the passages we hear preached on Sundays. Here, the teaching goes to the next step as we engage with the practical theology and Christian living that flow out of God's word, and wrestle with the questions that arise from what we're learning.

Our men's and women's events also aim to help us in our Christian growth





A story from our Rylea Rerekura

Joining a Home Group at WBC has been an excellent way for my husband and I to involve ourselves more holistically within the church community. Being given the opportunity and space to discuss each week's sermon in depth, connect quickly with a variety of members of the church and continue to meet with our church family mid-week has been a great blessing. Practically, it has helped me to feel welcomed into the church, to feel known and seen by those around me, and to feel accountable to continue to meet with our fellow believers. Spiritually, sitting down with a group of diverse people and hearing their thoughts and key takeaways from each week has helped me to deepen my understanding of the passage, develop my own thoughts and convictions more thoroughly, and has meant I am consistently dwelling on the Word and taking it to God, asking him to act in me and change my life according to what we hear each week.



by hearing thoughtful reflections and insights from different people in our church on particular topics. In the same vein, the chance to join the Wollongong Women's Conference and the Gong Men's Day has blessed those who could attend, and we have more WBC events coming in the remainder of the year!

By the Holy Spirit, these ministries have helped to shape us into the likeness of Jesus. We are thankful for the many volunteers and leaders who have invested their time, gifts, and care into these ministries, and we pray that God will continue to grow us all in Christian maturity.

BY THE NUMBERS



24

Number of Home Groups



248

People in a home group



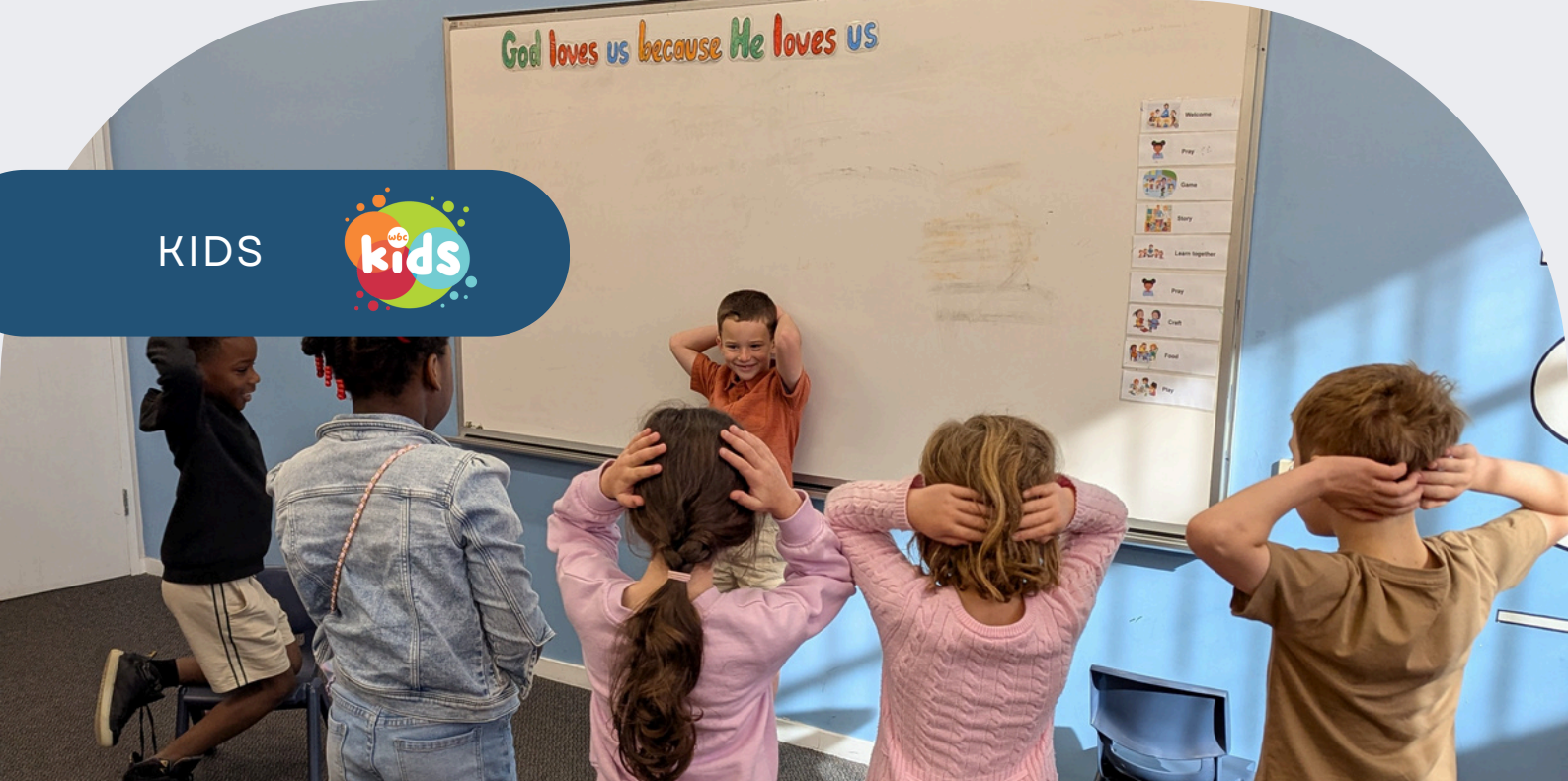
1,247

Listens of Deeper Podcast episodes



30

Podcast episodes



Taking the gospel to the next generation

Our prayer for the kids of WBC is that God will impact their head, heart and hands so they will follow Him all the days of their lives.

As we open the Bible each week at Kids Church, and as parents do the same at home, we pray that the children's knowledge of God (head), their love for him (heart) and their obedience to him (hands) will continue to grow. We thank God that, over the past year, we have seen encouraging evidence of this growth in the lives of many of our children.

We have been encouraged to hear parents share that their child has learnt a new memory verse from Kids Church, that their love for being at church has grown, or their child has put into practice something they learnt at Kids Church. Square One camp also provided wonderful opportunities for children to grow in their faith. It was a weekend full of discipleship, fun, and friendship, and is a highlight every year.

We are blessed at WBC to have so many leaders who invest in the next





A story from Penny & Luke Devitt

We love kids church. It's really fun and we like how we get to learn about God.

I (Luke) love how all the kids leaders give up their time to teach us each week. They make it fun to learn about God. I particularly like the crosswords we do sometimes about what we've learnt that day.

I (Penny) like the craft we do. I've got a special folder at home that I put it in and sometimes I look at it again and remember what we learnt.



generation by faithfully teaching God's word and caring for our children each week. We thank God for them and pray that he will continue to provide leaders for the coming year. At the moment we are in need of at least 10 more leaders to continue to invest in the kids of WBC.

fun and welcoming place for young families to connect with each other, explore different themes and learn about God. We have continued to have solid numbers of both church families and those not connected to our church, providing many opportunities to build relationships and share the hope of the gospel with them.

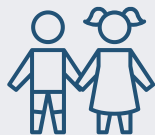
Playtime have also continued to provide a

BY THE NUMBERS



41

Volunteers
serving in
kids ministry



109

Average
number of kids
coming to WBC



16

Kids who
attended
Square 1 Camp



36

Average
playtime
attendance



Taking the gospel to the next generation

This year kicked off with great momentum from last year. We have been blessed with a full team of faithful leaders who have intentionally invested in and discipled our youth throughout the year.

Friday nights have been filled with plenty of fun, laughter and friendship, while also giving us the opportunity to wrestle with what God's Word means for the lives of our young people. We have been learning what it looks like to engage with the Bible for ourselves and what it means to live on mission by sharing the hope of Jesus with our

friends.

This year we also introduced a "Bring a Mate" night once a term, creating opportunities for our youth to invite their friends and helping us be intentional about welcoming new people into our community. We have encouraged our young people to get involved in ministry teams, particularly through music and tech, giving them opportunities to serve and use the gifts God has given them.

We have also begun investing more deeply in youth Bible studies, creating





A story from Bree Andrews

There are so many reasons why Immerse is my favourite part of the week.

God used and kept using Immerse to teach me who He is and who we are in Him. He gives me a community: a group of people who encourage, teach and guide. It's where I learned to break down a Bible passage and see what God says, to serve and to share Jesus with my friends.

For teenagers who are thinking about what they will do with their lives, coming to Immerse is such a good way to see what God says about our lives and how to bring glory to Him in any situation. I love going to youth group. I know I'll be greeted with smiles, fun games, food, discussion groups that dive deeper into God's word and God's love displayed through dedicated youth leaders who give up their time for me. I am thankful to God, my friends there, and the leaders who make youth a highlight of every single week.

spaces where young people can go deeper into God's Word, grow in their faith and build meaningful Christian community.

A lot is happening at Youth at the moment, and much of it is still just beginning. We are excited

about what God is doing and are praying that our youth would continue to grow in their love for Jesus, become increasingly grounded in His Word, and be equipped to reach the young people of our city with the gospel.



BY THE NUMBERS



9

Youth group
leaders



28

Average
attendance at
Youth Group



23

People who
attended
KYCK

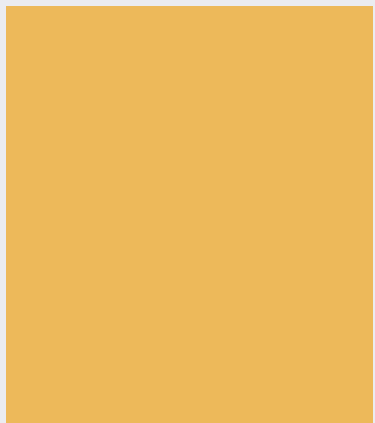


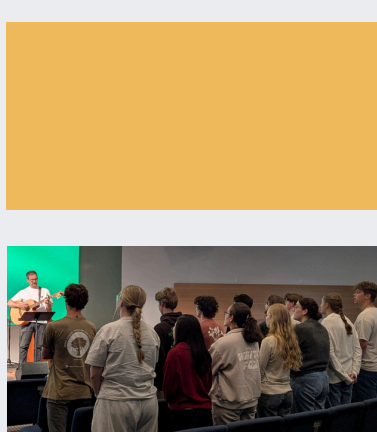
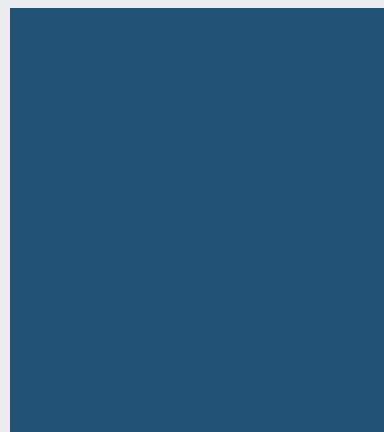
22

Young Adults
heading to
Spark

LIFE TOGETHER

Every photo tells a story of God's faithfulness as people gathered, served, grew and celebrated together throughout the year.





GOSPEL PARTNERS

Til every knee shall bow

JOSH & ALI REEVE Albania

Josh is the Principal of Crossroads Bible School in Erseka where they teach and disciple students from around the world



RICHARD & ESTHER AKOGUN Nigeria

Richard is the mission director of IYINFEST, a ministry that focuses on evangelism and helping believers grow in their faith

JAMES & SHILA ROY Bangladesh

James leads the House Church of Bangladesh, a church planting network of over 30 churches



PHILIP & KIM Cambodia

Philip and Kim work in Bible translation to bring the gospel to an unreached ethnic minority group

RICHARD & ALI MAEGRAITH GERMANY

Rich and Ali pastor a church in Berlin while also seeking to reach the music community



JASMINE NG Thailand

Jasmine and her team at Project Video aim to get the gospel to people in a language they can understand using media



JORDAN & RACHEL MILBURN Sydney

Jordan works for Quiz Worx, sharing Jesus with kids through creative performances

SAMAR MUSSON Wollongong

Samar teaches Scripture (SRE) and runs lunchtime Christian groups at Smith's Hill HS



MATTHEW MEEK Wollongong

Matthew seeks to reach international students with the gospel, here at UOW and across Australia through the FOCUS ministry

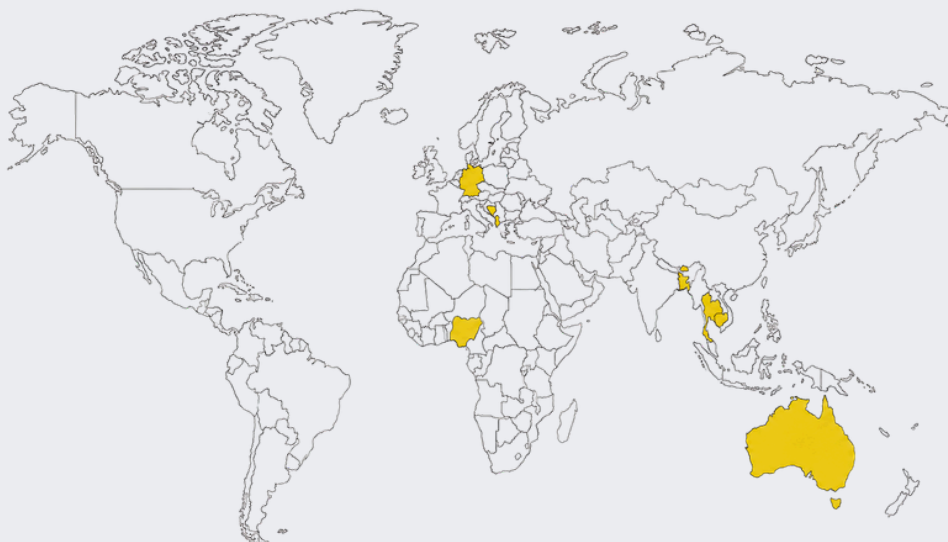
SCOTT & RACHEL ADAMSON Toowomba

Scott works for Power to Change using digital ministry to make disciples



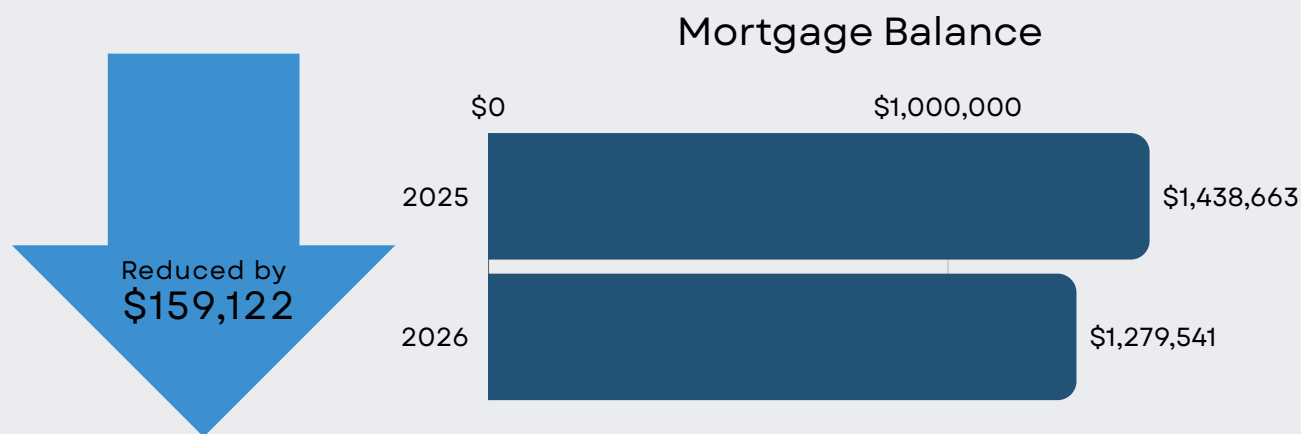
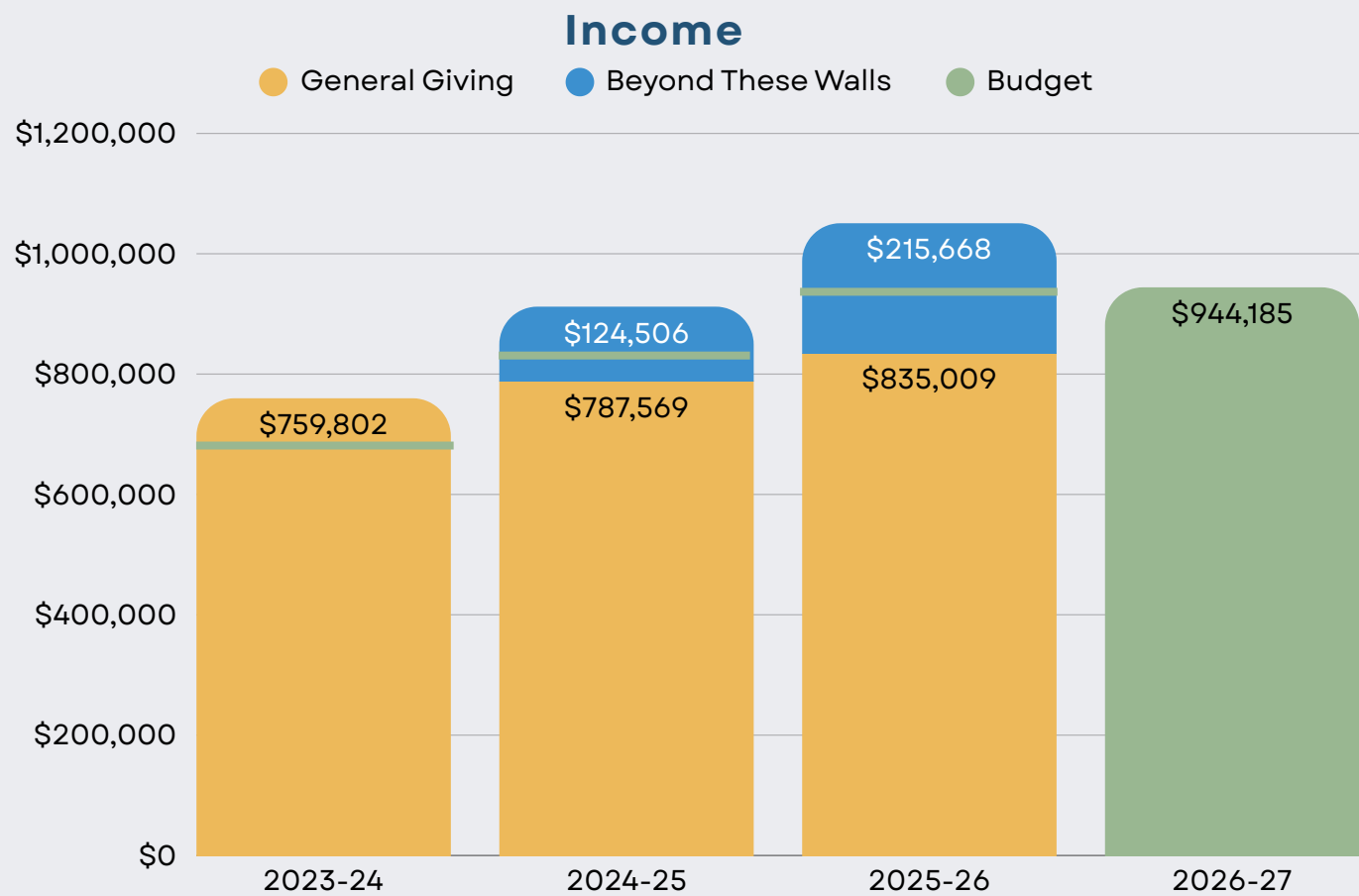
ANDREW BEDDOE Sydney

Andrew is the principle of Vocational Bible College, providing theological and ministry training to equip everyday people



FINANCIAL REPORT

Faithful with what he provides

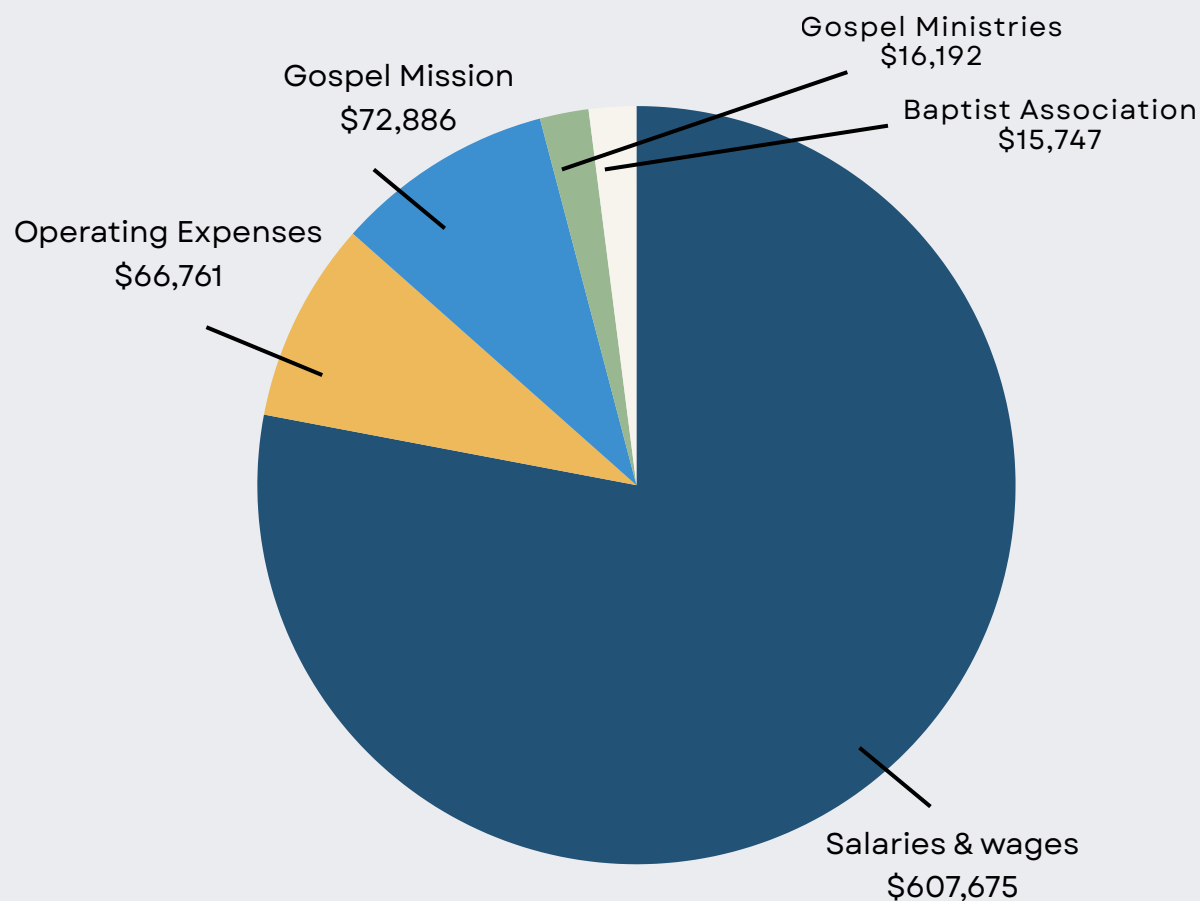


\$121,340
Minimum mortgage repayments made

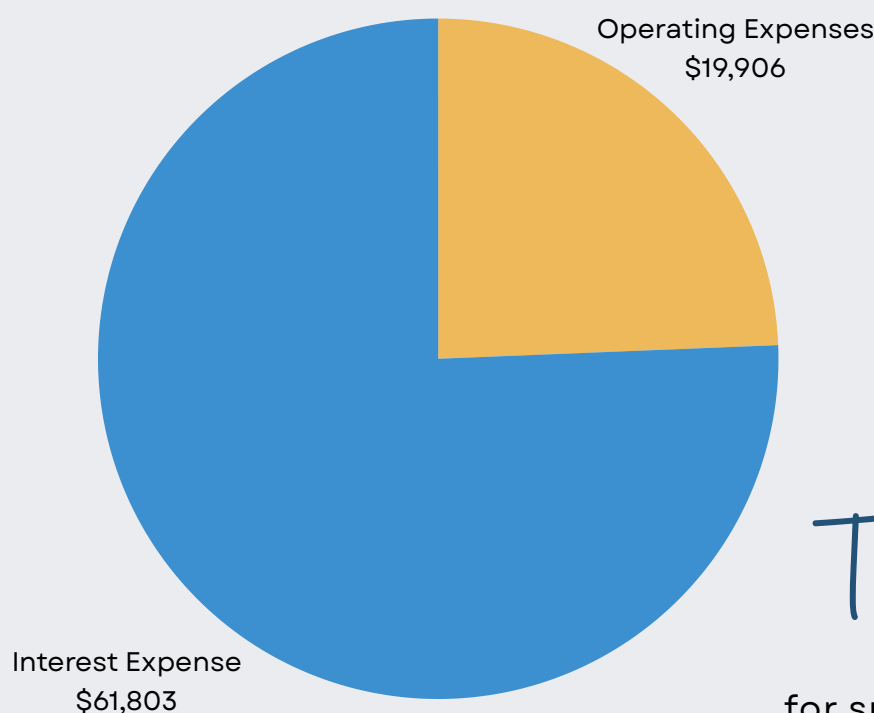
\$103,251
Additional mortgage repayments made

\$125,017
Remaining in the Mortgage Fund

2025-26 Expenditure
Wollongong Baptist Church



2025-26 Expenditure
83 Kenny St



Thank you

for supporting God's work at
Wollongong Baptist Church and
around the world



We thank the NSW Government for their generous support via the following grants in the past year, these go a long way to making WBC a safer and more inclusive space for our community.

Funding for this project has been provided by the NSW Government - Communities & Justice:

- Community Building Partnership 2025 - Shade Sail and PA system for the foyer - \$11,000

Funding for this project has been provided by the NSW Government - Multicultural NSW:

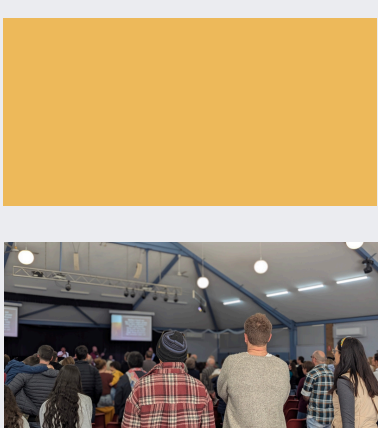
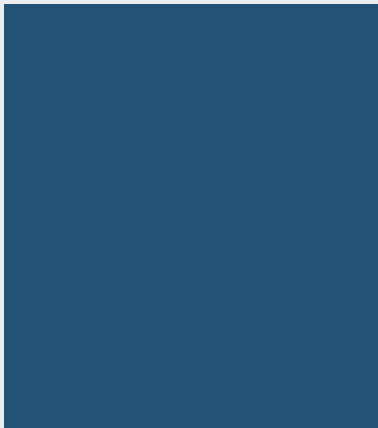
- Safe Places for Faith Communities Grants 2025-26 - New external door security system - \$6,623

Proudly funded by



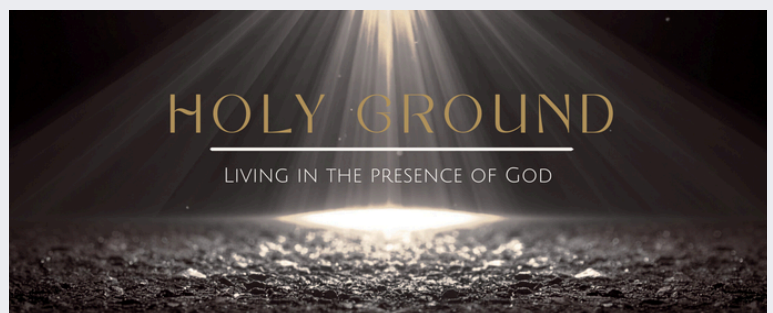
DAY CAMP 2025

We gathered together with Calderwood Valley Baptist Church for a wonderful day of spending unhurried time together and learning from the book of Ruth about God’s mercy and providence in every season



SERMON SERIES

Every week, God's word proclaimed



STAFF TEAM

Serving Wollongong Baptist Church



MARK ROBERTS
Senior Pastor



KATE COLE
Membership



MICHAEL PARKER
Maturity



KYRA MORRIS
Children



SARAH GRANT
Administration



BEN CAMILLERI
Youth



GRACE JONES
Magnification



SAM MAHDAVI
Mission

ELDERS

Caring for The body of Christ



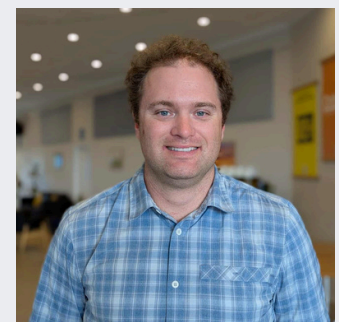
SIMON LAINSON



JERRY ALOKO



TIM FAIRBAIRN



BEN LEFFLEY



WOLLONGONG
BAPTIST CHURCH