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# Annual Report

**A report on all the ways  
God has been at work  
in our church in 2016.**

**VINE CHURCH + ST MICHAEL'S**

## OUR VISION

We want to see a community of Christians in our city that are passionately devoted to sharing their faith, serving others with joy, and growing in the knowledge and love of Jesus.

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## OUR PURPOSES

**Magnification:** we exist to live in awe, dependence, and holiness as we magnify the greatness of Jesus Christ.

**Maturity:** we exist to grow to become fully mature disciples of Jesus by bringing every part of our life under His word.

**Ministry:** we exist to serve others with a glad and joyful heart because our God gladly served us.

**Mission:** we exist to do something about the millions of people in our city who don't know Jesus by urgently speaking the gospel to our friends and family.

**Membership:** we exist to join God's family, gather with His people and care deeply for each other.

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## OUR MISSION

Our prayer is that God would gather 1% of the 103,000 people living within a 2km radius of Surry Hills as fully devoted disciples of Jesus Christ by 2023.

# Table of Contents

Letter from the Lead Pastor	<b>04</b>
Property Planning	<b>11</b>
Maturity	<b>12</b>
Mission	<b>16</b>
Magnification	<b>20</b>
Ministry	<b>24</b>
Membership	<b>25</b>
Vine Kids	<b>30</b>
Sunday Gatherings	<b>32</b>
Staff Team	<b>34</b>
Finances	<b>36</b>
How can I be involved in 2017?	<b>39</b>



# Letter from the Lead Pastor

Dear friends of Vine Church + St Michael's,

I'm thrilled to report to you on the ways we've seen God at work among us over the past year. I have the most amazing job in the world, leading such a great bunch of people who are devoted to Christ and want others to experience the joy of knowing him. It's a thrilling time to be alive and this is a great family to be a part of. I've seen people love one another deeply and grow so much. I've seen a real hunger to know God better and bear up under difficulty. I've seen people take risks and start new ministries. And I've seen people be very generous with their time and money. I give thanks for you all!

As most of you will know, Vine Church + St Michael's came together as two separate churches in 2015 to reach our city with the good news of Jesus. Our current double-barrel name reflects some of the complexity blended families experience when they commit to one another for a common purpose. As I reflect on the past year, I am so thankful to God because it doesn't feel like we're two blended families anymore but one family devoted to the same thing — inviting our city to enjoy the freedom and forgiveness Jesus offers.

## What was our focus in 2016?

In bringing these two families together, God put it on my heart to bring focus our church on being devoted to him in 2016.

Devotion is an idea that few would say characterise our generation. Rising numbers of thinkers today are saying that at some point over the past forty years people around the world entered what has been called the 'age of possibility'.<sup>1</sup> We've become intolerant of any arrangement that might close-off our personal options. We find it difficult to say "yes" to anything because there's so much on offer, and to say yes to this, means we might miss out on that. Because we live in an age of possibilities, we find it difficult to dive in, be present, commit and devote ourselves to Jesus' church. And yet, at the same time, there is an immense loneliness and profound hunger for community in us. The American sociologist Robert Bellah describes this paradox in this way:

I think people are not happy with radical individualism. I think people want connectedness and community. But I think they're not willing to give up the private quest for money and power that would be necessary to create genuine community — at least not yet. We haven't come to the crunch on that.<sup>2</sup>

So in the past year we've worked hard together to overcome the radical individualism that lies within our hearts that holds us back from whole-hearted devotion to Jesus and his people.

<sup>1</sup> David Brooks, 'The Age of Possibility', *New York Times*, November 15, 2012, Online: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/16/opinion/brooks-the-age-of-possibility.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Robert N. Bellah, 'Habits of the Heart: Implications for Religion' (Isla Vista, CA: St. Mark's Catholic Church, February 21, 1986), Online: [http://www.robertbellah.com/lectures\\_5.htm](http://www.robertbellah.com/lectures_5.htm).

## What did we learn from the Bible in 2016?

We **began the year** — as we always do — by looking at the life and teaching of our Saviour. We worked through John 5-12 and saw that Jesus is the one who is devoted to us, and that's why it's a joy to be devoted to him.

In **term 2**, we looked at Jesus' letter to the seven churches in Revelation 2-3, and how every church that has ever existed faces the danger of being devoted to the wrong things, and lukewarm in their devotion to the right things. We also spent some time in term 2 working through the doctrine of the Trinity—that we worship one God, in three persons. We discovered that God had no need to create us. It wasn't as if he was lonely. In fact, he's never been lonely for he's always existed in perfect community as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They are infinitely happy, eternally loving, and forever devoted to one another. And the reason He created us was to share his devotion and join him in it.

In **term 3**, we went back into the Old Testament and looked at the story of the people of God under the leadership of Joshua. We learnt that success in our spiritual life comes through obedience and devotion.

In **term 4**, we spent some time thinking about six different areas God calls us to be devoted, namely:

1. to Christ,
2. to growing as Christians,
3. to serving the body of Christ,
4. to brotherly love,
5. to generosity, and
6. to liberating people from darkness to light.

Finally, in the lead up to **Christmas**, we finished the year looking at the prophesy of Isaiah to remind ourselves of the hope that dawned with the coming of Christ.

What a year! I pray you've been challenged and encouraged, strengthened and trained to devote your life to the cause of Christ. I am so thankful that you come to church so hungry to listen to God's word, and ready to test and approve all that's good in it. Don't forget you can listen to any of the sermons online at [vinechurch.com.au/resources](http://vinechurch.com.au/resources).

## What is our focus in 2017?

Looking forward to 2017, the staff team and I felt compelled to focus on the theme of building Christ's church. Not with bricks and mortar, though there are implications for this, but building people *on* the foundation of Christ, *up* as a house in which God dwells, and *out* in size and strength as we surround ourselves with God's people whom we sit with, lean on and support.

As I've thought through this theme, I've come across the work of Princeton sociologist, Robert Wuthnow, who looks at three successive generations: the builders, the boomers, and what he calls the tinkers. While our grandparents built, and our parents boomed, he says our generation tinkers. That is, we're not busy building for future generations. We're tinkering. We tinker with truth, tinker with church, tinker with tinder dates, tinker with beliefs. We're not consistent. We don't stick around long enough to leave a legacy. We struggle to make decisions. And we don't follow through. What this means is our generation is far less fruitful than we ought to be.<sup>3</sup>

But Christ calls us to build (Ephesians 4:11-13). And He's been building for 2,000 years and the gates of hell cannot, nor will it, overcome his church. But if all we do is tinker, then he will move on and pour out his blessing elsewhere, and he may even remove our lampstand (Revelation 2:5). This year I'm asking you to join together as we put on the hard hat, roll out the blueprint, and get our hands dirty as we build a church on the foundation of Jesus and up in love so that it's a place where God is pleased to dwell (Ephesians 4:16, 1 Peter 2:4-5).

### What will we be learning from the Bible in 2017?

In 2017, we're starting with the person of Jesus by looking at his last night with his disciples in **John 13-17**. Here he teaches some foundational truths on which they will go out and build the church.

In term 2, we're going back 500 years to look at the foundational protestant doctrines — called **the solas** — of how our salvation is entirely the work of God alone. Also in term 2, we're looking at the **Song of Songs**, which is ancient biblical poetry that teaches us about love, sex and marriage. As we build our church and our lives as a place suitable for God to dwell we need to pay attention to what's going on in the bedroom! ;)

In term 3, we're looking at another Old Testament book, **Nehemiah**, and the challenge the people of God had in rebuilding their lives and city under the reign of God. Also in term 3, we will be looking at the New Testament letter, Titus, and how the early church built their life together.

Finally in term 4, we will be spending time looking at a variety of topics related to being **kingdom builders**.

It's going to be a great year of hearing God speak and having him challenge and invite us to join him building the church.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Wuthnow, *After the Baby Boomers: How Twenty-and Thirty-Somethings Are Shaping the Future of American Religion* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 13. See also Kevin DeYoung, *Just Do Something: A Liberating Approach to Finding God's Will* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2009), chap. 1.

## Where does our physical building fit in?

One of the implications of this is what we are doing with our property. Generations ago, Christians built churches in every suburb of Australia to provide places where the spiritual work of building people on the foundation of Jesus and up in love could happen. I don't want our church to tinker, and so we need to plan how best to utilise our property to be a place where the spiritual work of building happens.

The wardens and parish council spent 2016 addressing a number of maintenance issues with our buildings and investigating ways to improve them to make them a more welcoming place for people to explore Jesus. We're also decreasing our reliance on property income in our operations budget so that we can reinvest it into the improvement of our buildings for ministry. The goal is an inviting, transparent, flexible site which facilitates people learning about the one true foundation for life — Jesus — and provides an opportunity for people to get to know one another and build each other up in love.

It is for these reasons we moved the 4.30pm gathering into the church at the end of 2016. While this took some convincing, many people have shared how they now feel a greater sense of ownership as we have our own place. The church, office and hall has become a go-to-space for all kinds of midweek meetings. It's provided a more visible front door to our community and we've seen more people walk into church. And of course that's what matters most! I love it that more and more people are getting to hear the lifesaving news of Jesus.

## Stories of God at work

Throughout the year, we saw 61 people explore the things of Christ by coming to an Open Forum or our Christianity Explored course. Wow! For every one of these who trusts in Jesus, the angels in heaven rejoice!

We've seen significant steps of growth in many people. Almost every week I hear a story of someone who has finally 'got' the gospel and it's implications for their life. I've seen tears in people's eyes as the weight of what Jesus has done for us overwhelms them.

We've seen people testify to God's goodness even as they've dealt with the darkness of temptation, divorce, sexual abuse, cancer, loneliness, and grief.

Then there's the stories of those in our wider community who are considering Jesus through the impact of Playtime, the Mardi Gras BBQ, Made with Love, and Bread of Life.

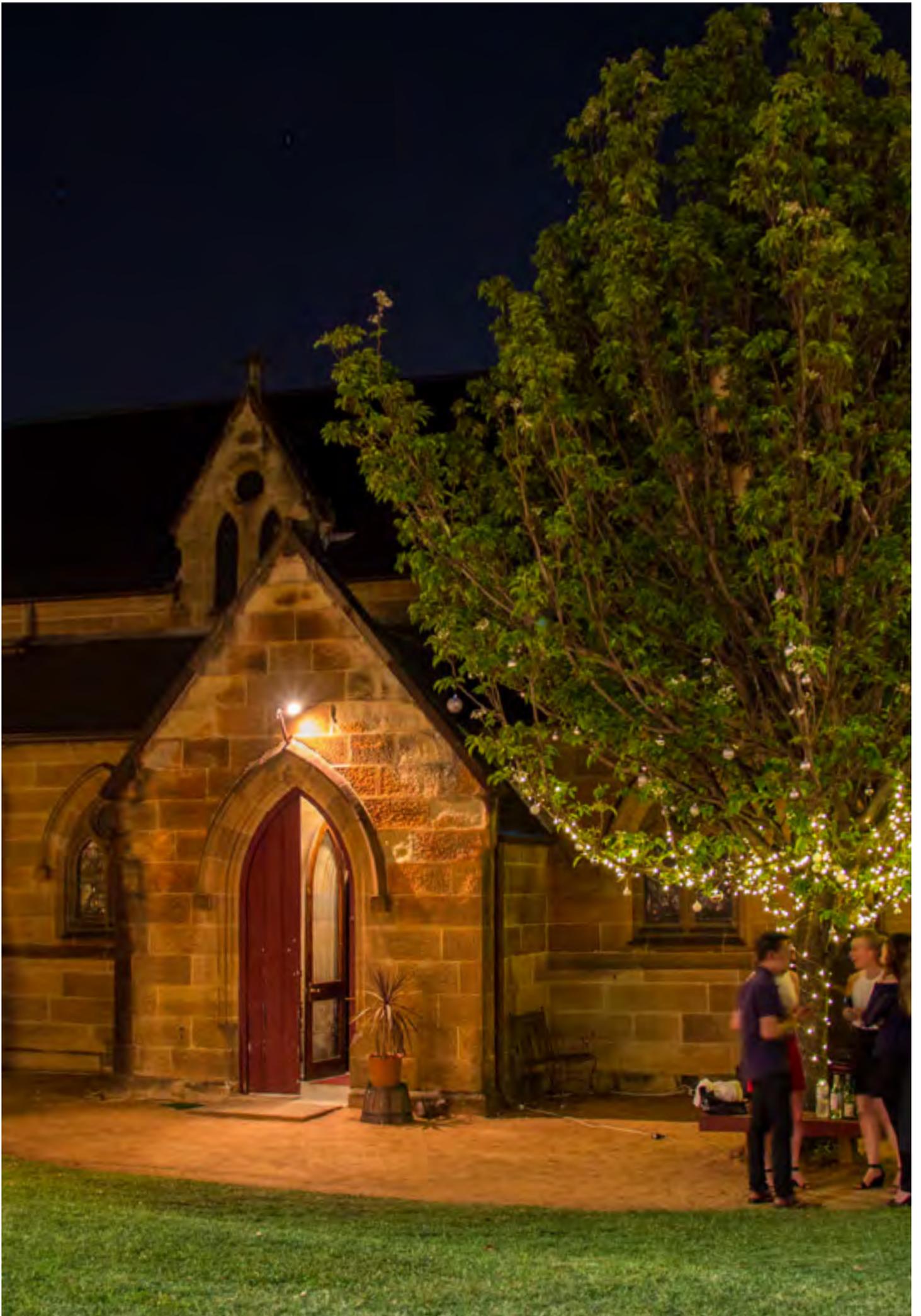
This is what this report is about. It's an account of all the ways God has been at work in the lives of many people this year. Enjoy it! Give great thanks for his work. But pray urgently that God might do more in us, among us and through us.

Let's spend 2017 building on Jesus as our foundation and building each other up in love!

For Jesus fame,







# Property Planning

Over 2016 the wardens and parish council began a process of engaging a qualified team to create a Master Plan for St Michael's Surry Hills (196-200 Albion Street, Surry Hills). This site has operated since 1854, and encompasses the church, the office and the hall.

In thinking about the future as five gatherings totalling 1,000 people by 2023, we see three strategic opportunities:

1. St Michael's has a privileged public position on the corner of a busy intersection with hundreds of thousands of passers-by each week.
2. St Michael's comprises a relatively large land area, including three buildings with significant space between and around.
3. Vine Church + St Michael's has been growing for a number of years, and a better utilised site will provide greater effectiveness in welcoming people to hear about Jesus

As we began the process of planning, we have clarified a number of things we value in our physical environment. These values include:

1. Welcoming and inviting: We want people to notice the church and to feel free to come inside
2. Accessible and modern: While respecting our heritage context, we don't want to feel like a church from the 1850s. We want to feel modern, accessible, approachable and "neutral" as much as possible.
3. Capacity: We want to have as large a capacity as possible so that we can invite more and more people to hear about Jesus.
4. Connected: We want people to be drawn toward connecting and building community after church. We don't want people remaining anonymous and leaving without talking to anyone.
5. Intuitive: People should feel like they know exactly where to go and where to find what they need (whether that's a meeting room, the bathrooms, or kids rooms).
6. Safety and transparency: We want people to be able to look in from outside on all our meetings to see that we've got nothing to hide. We also want kids to be safe and protected at all times.
7. Training and equipping: We want spaces to train and equip generations of people to know God and make him know.

Bringing all this together, our strategy is threefold:

1. Firstly, we want to repurpose our heritage buildings for modern use.
2. Secondly, we want to build capacity for 1,000 people meeting in five gatherings by 2023.
3. Thirdly, we want to create flow and build synergy between each of the buildings on site by designing a social space which connects these areas.

Please pray and encourage the wardens and parish council as they make progress in pursuing this project.

# Maturity

*But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into Him who is the head – Christ. (Ephesians 4:15)*

## What are we praying for?

A dynamic community of mature disciples who want to grow in Jesus by bringing every part of their life under his word.

## What did we do in 2016?

Andy Bryan joined us at the start of 2016 to work alongside Steph Toose seeking to encourage and grow us through the study of God's word both corporately and individually. Steph finished up in her role after having a baby midyear and she was replaced part-time by Esther Neate.

In 2016 the maturity team started:

- **Introduction to the Bible** – a Preliminary Theological Certificate (PTC) course that runs for 10 weeks and helps those participating to see the big story of the Bible and how it culminates in Jesus.
- **Regular Community Group Leader's Huddles** – termly meetings where the leaders meet for training and encouragement.
- **Leader's notes** – notes were produced each week for leaders to help them study God's word as they prepare for Community Group.
- **Bible Reading Plan** – to help us hear God speak to us in his word each day.

**Community Groups** continue to be the fundamental element in growing mature disciples of Christ. As such, we trained 21 new leaders in 2016 to be prepared to start new groups.

Many of us met throughout the year for **one-to-one** Bible reading, prayer and encouragement. These small informal gatherings provided great support and pushed us to dig deeply into God's word and become like Christ.

**Sunday preaching** is where we have a chance to hear the word of God proclaimed to us. Over the year we sought to hear God speak in the Old and New Testaments, and what the Bible teaches on a number of different topics.

- In term 1 we continued to work through the Gospel of John. Jesus performed many signs and wonders in chapters 5-12 and these miracles attest to the truth that he is God, the Messiah, the one who came to rescue us from our sin.
- In term 2 we dived into two challenging series. The first was on the letter to the seven churches in Revelation 2-3 where we saw that remaining faithful to Christ in a hostile world would be challenging but, because of his grace, not impossible. The second was a short series on the Trinity where we saw that God is perfect in his love.



44

Women at Nourish

13

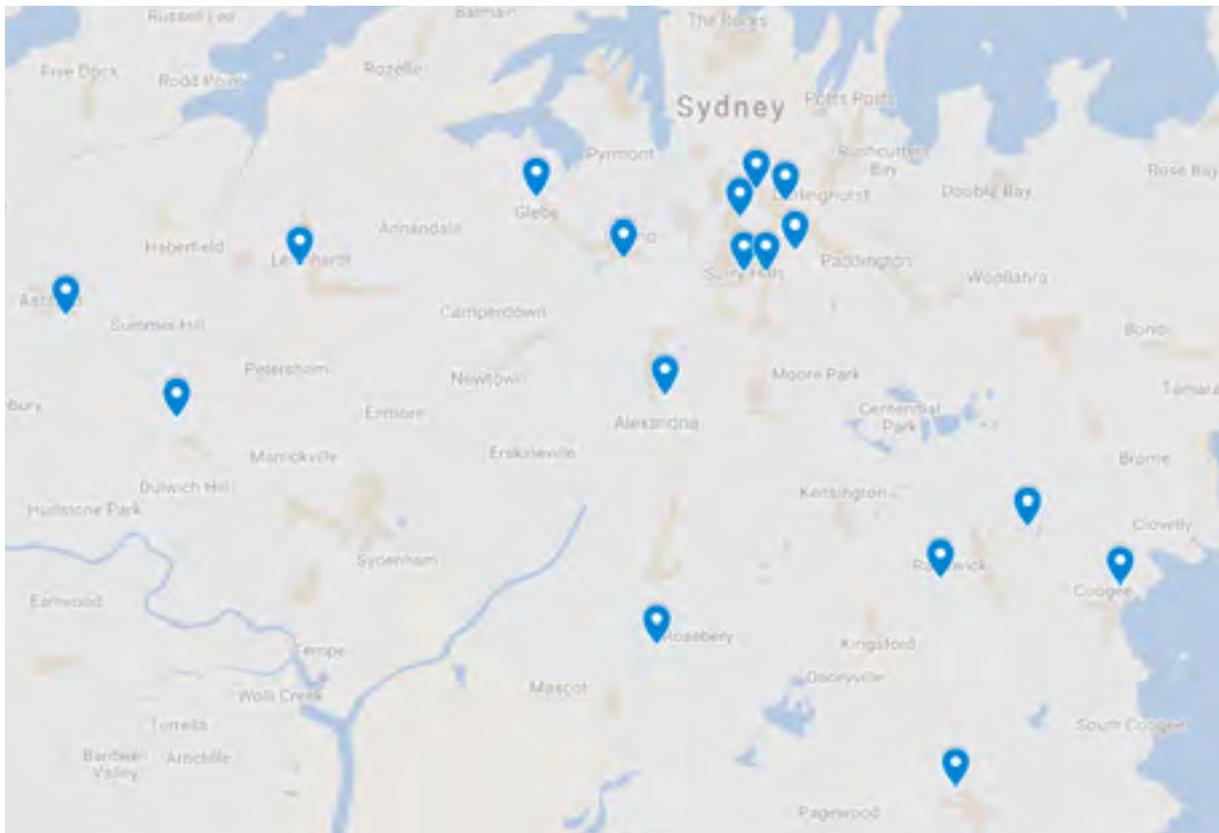
People at PTC course

- In term 3 we worked through the epic Old Testament book of Joshua where we saw the loving grace of God in keeping his promises.
- In term 4 we looked at who we are as the Church of Christ through our vision series. The challenge of being the devoted people of God was evident as we set our hearts and minds on being Christ-centred and devoted to His glory.
- Finally, in our Christmas series we saw a thrill of hope from Isaiah. We were captured by the wonder of God coming as a man in Christ to bring hope to a broken world.

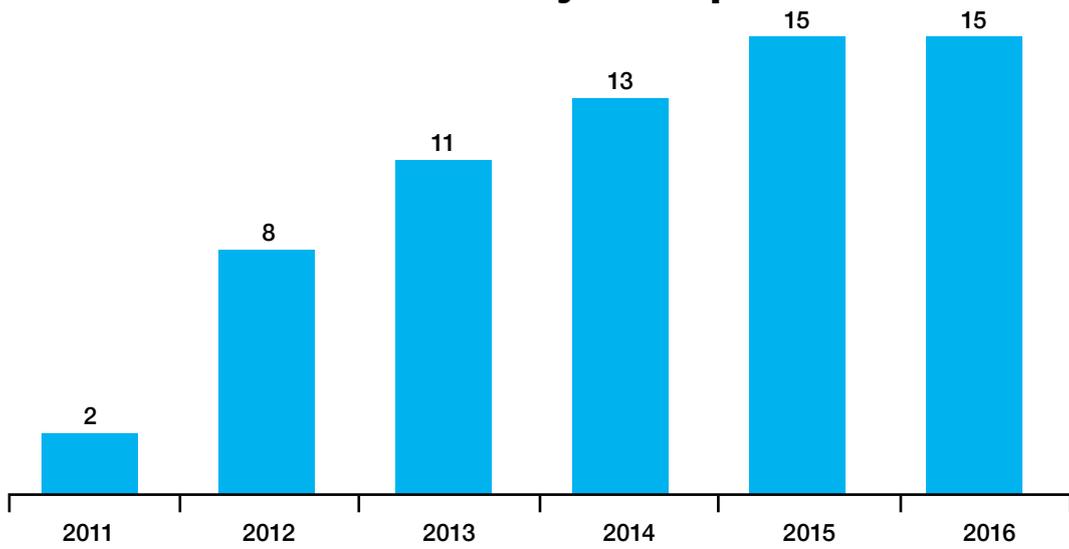
### Where are we going in 2017 and beyond?

- Training and developing more Community Group leaders to plant more groups in our city.
- Providing multiple PTC courses throughout the year for our members to dig deeper into God's word.
- Building a culture of personal Bible reading and reading the Bible with others one-to-one.
- Developing a strong culture of personal spiritual growth through the reading of excellent and available Christian resources.

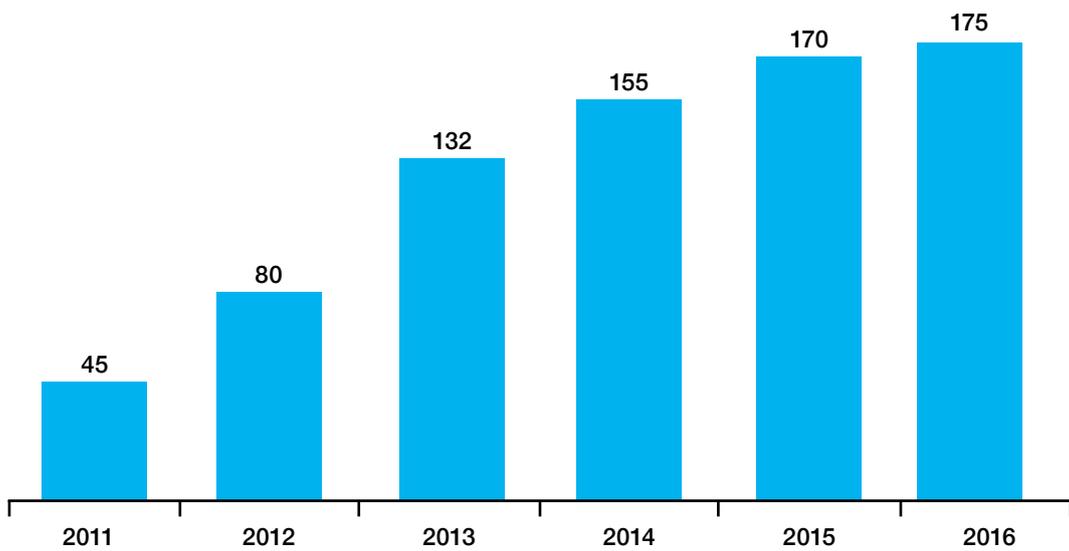
## Community Group Locations



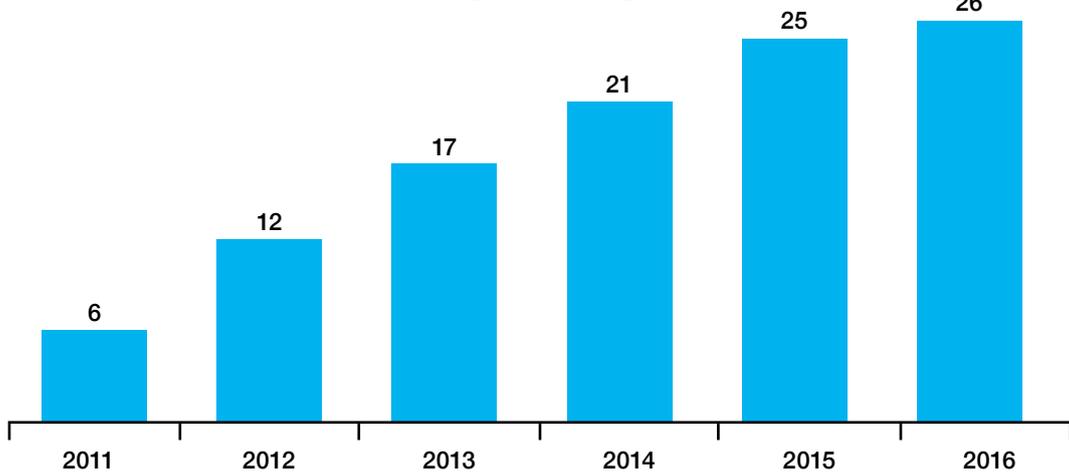
## Community Groups



## People in Community Groups



## Community Group Leaders



# Mission

*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.* (Matthew 28:18–20)

## What are we praying for?

- An army of Christians urgently sharing the good news of Jesus in our world.
- A flood of people going from death to life as they become disciples of Jesus.

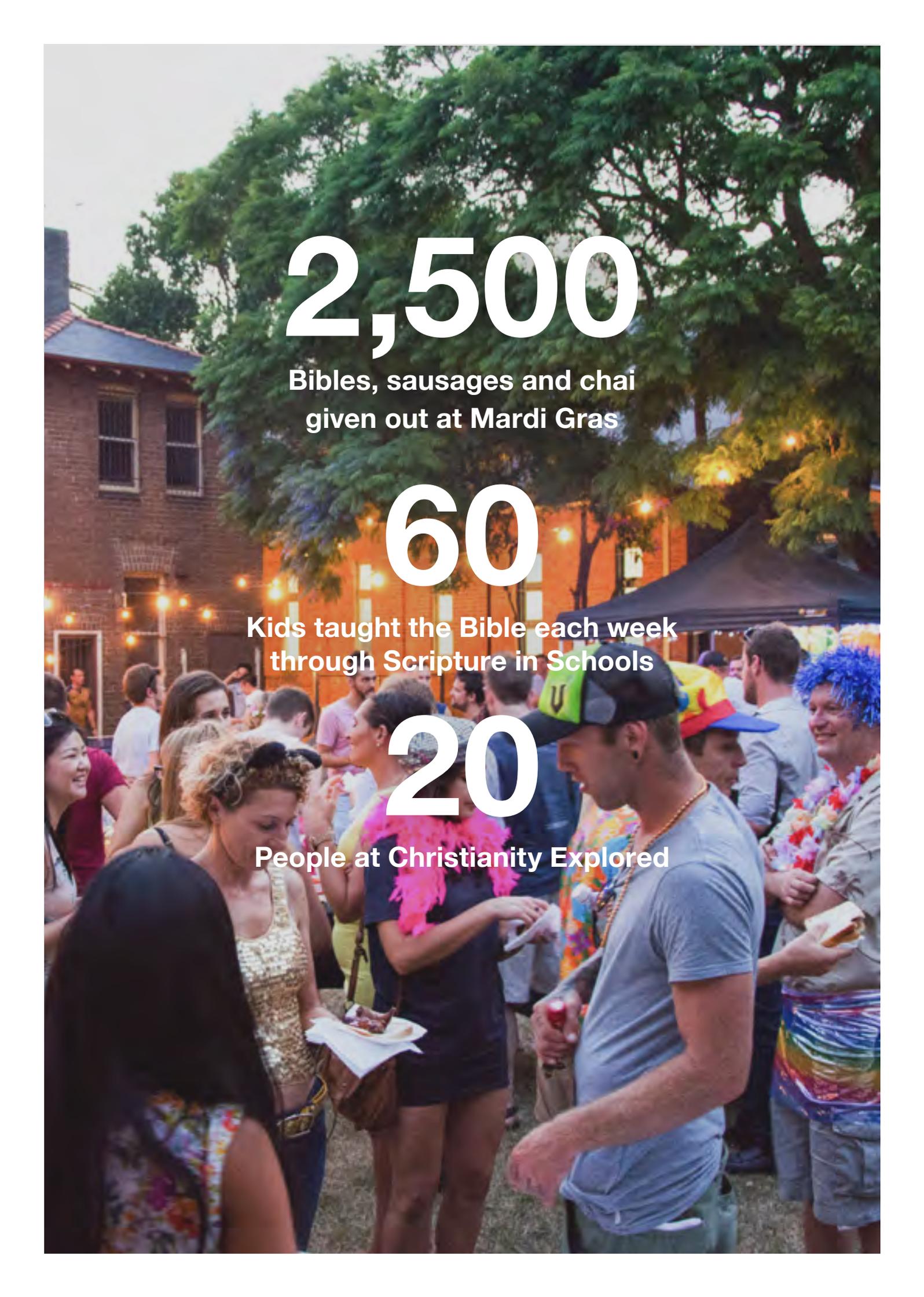
## What did we do in 2016?

In 2016 we brought on board Joel Hollier to oversee Mission (and Membership) full time. Building on the work that had been established in previous years, Joel sought to build a culture within our church of faithful disciple-making disciples, reaching out to our city and beyond with the good news of salvation in Christ. In order to achieve this, we continue to build a pathway which seeks to guide people in their journey to knowing Jesus.

<b>Initiative:</b>	Community Connections	Open Forums	Christianity Explored	Basic
<b>Stage:</b>	Disconnected	Sceptical	Seeking	Establishing

Over the past year we've built more **Community Connections** which are designed to start conversations with people in our community.

- Serving our city at **Mardi Gras** saw around 2,000 people enter our church site, engaging in hundreds of gospel conversations over a free BBQ, pancakes and chai.
- **Give Flowers, Give Love** saw positive community response at the Surry Hills Festival.
- **Scripture in Schools** continues to see the Bible taught at two local public schools, with around 60 kids attending each week.
- **Playtime** was started to provide a space for kids and their parents to make new friends and form community in an area that can be lonely for young parents.
- **Made With Love** started to build connections with men and women in our community who society has often overlooked.
- On top of this, hundreds of gospel opportunities took place every day as we took Jesus into our workplaces, families and social circles.



**2,500**

**Bibles, sausages and chai  
given out at Mardi Gras**

**60**

**Kids taught the Bible each week  
through Scripture in Schools**

**20**

**People at Christianity Explored**

In 2016 we saw 41 people gather over three nights in local pubs for our **Open Forums** in which we discussed a range of topics, including:

- What role should religion play in the public sphere?
- Isn't religion the cause of war?
- Can we be good without God?

In 2016 we saw another 20 people explore who Jesus is and what it means to follow him at **Christianity Explored**.

**Basic**, introduced toward the end of 2015, was adapted and refined to be more effective in helping people after Christianity Explored understand what it means to follow Jesus. We saw five people go through Basic in 2016.

**Going Global**, a small but passionate team of people, has been mobilised to consider how we partner with those taking the gospel to the world. The Apieczoneks in Paris continue to appreciate a growing connection with us, and we are seeking to establish more partners in 2017.

Over the year we ran a handful of training sessions to build our personal skills in witnessing to Jesus

- **Summer Sessions** was a series of three evenings run in January 2016, encouraging people to think creatively about how to speak the gospel faithfully in various spheres of their life.
- A three-week **Upskilled** training course was run taking people through what the gospel is and how to communicate it to people effectively.

### Where are we going in 2017 and beyond?

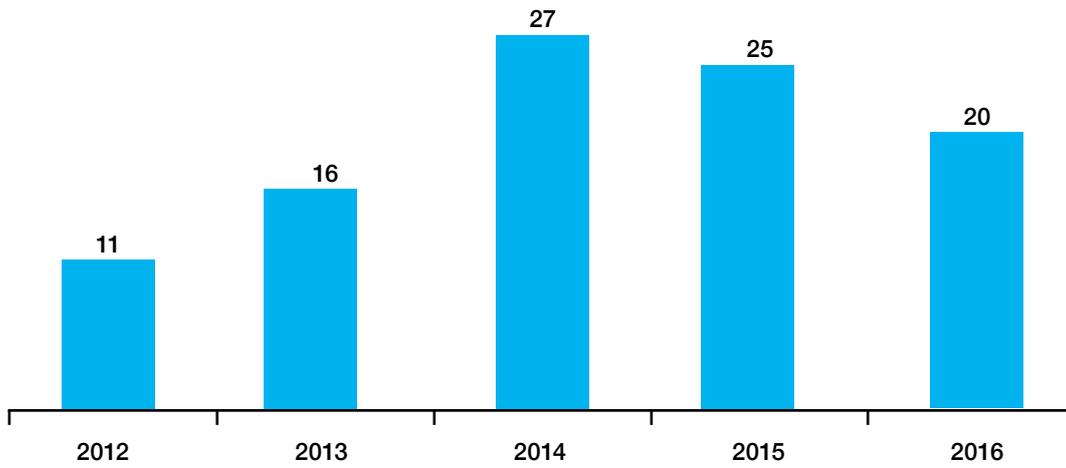
Our aim in Mission is to build

- our **conviction** to reach people with the gospel,
- our **confidence** that the gospel is good news,
- our **competence** in sharing the message of life, and
- our **connections** with our local community.

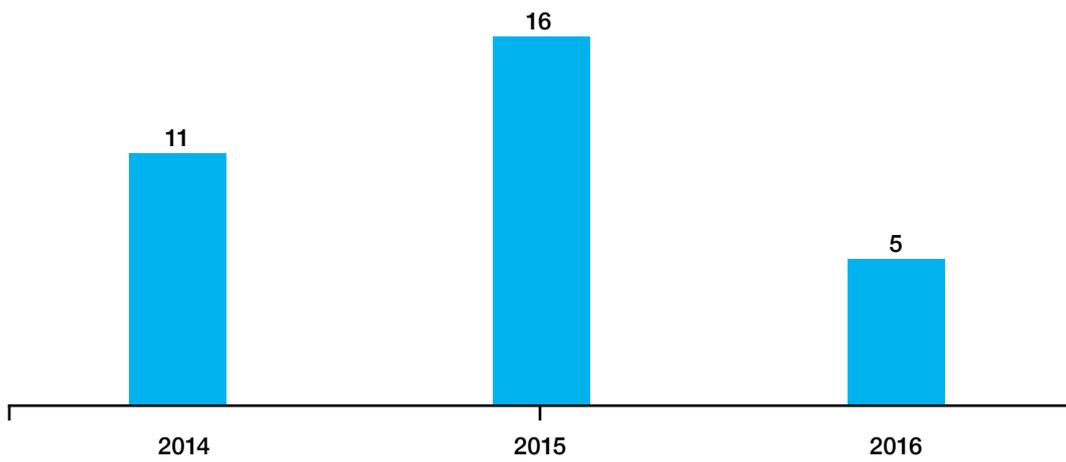
As such we will be:

- Investing further in equipping and training through Upskilled and developing further training modules.
- Investing in and growing teams of people to oversee key mission initiatives such as Mardi Gras, Summer Sessions, Christianity Explored, Life Explored (a brand new course) and Basic.

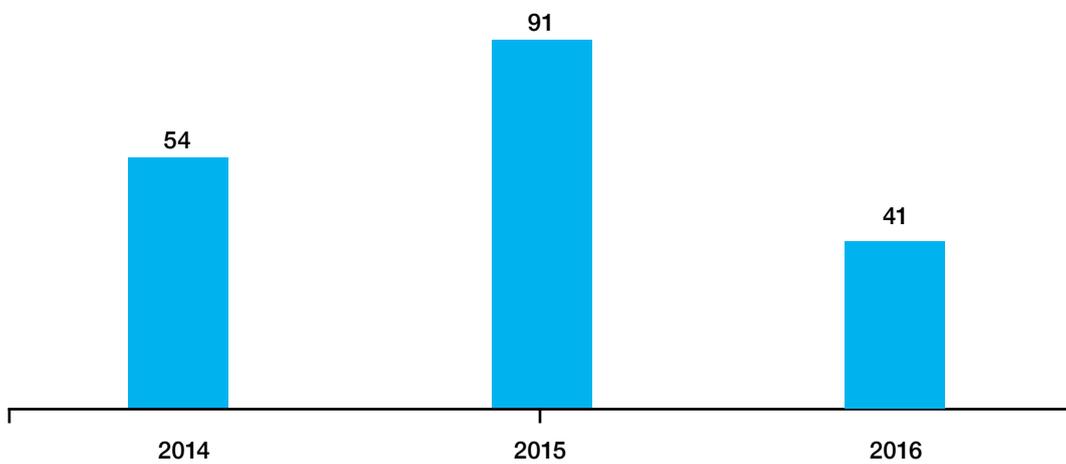
## Christianity Explored



## Basic



## Open Forums



# Magnification

*Teach me your way, LORD,  
that I may rely on your faithfulness;  
give me an undivided heart,  
that I may fear your name.  
I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart;  
I will glorify your name forever.*  
(Psalm 86:11–13)

## What are we praying for?

A passionate community of disciples who magnify the greatness of God in awe, dependence and holiness.

## What did we do in 2016?

In 2016, we sought to enhance the quality of singing God's praises at our services by bringing on Daniel May as **Music Director**. Over the year, he gathered and grew the team of musicians who led us in glad-hearted praise of God on Sundays.

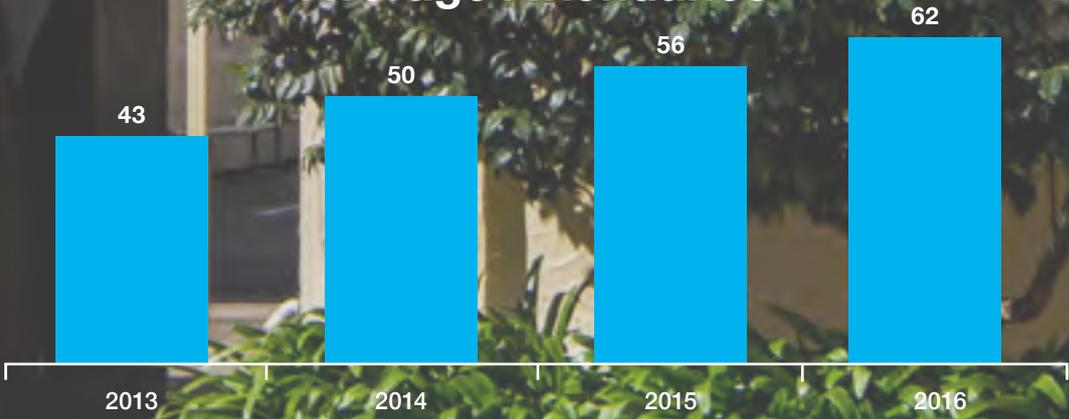
Over the year, we gathered for three **Prayer & Praise nights**. We saw greater buy-in over the year, especially after we moved our final night to the church hall. Additionally, the prayer team gathered each week on Sundays to bring our church to God in prayer, and ran two prayer retreats which trained people to spend focussed time with God in his word and in prayer.

The real fruit of Magnification happens on **Monday mornings** when people go to work and live a life that shows the world that God is more important than their careers, relationships, health and finances. We've seen people worship God by being generous, avoiding ungodly relationships, speaking the truth in love, persevering in trial, praying, recognising God's gifts in small things, and listening to his word expectantly, and much, much more.

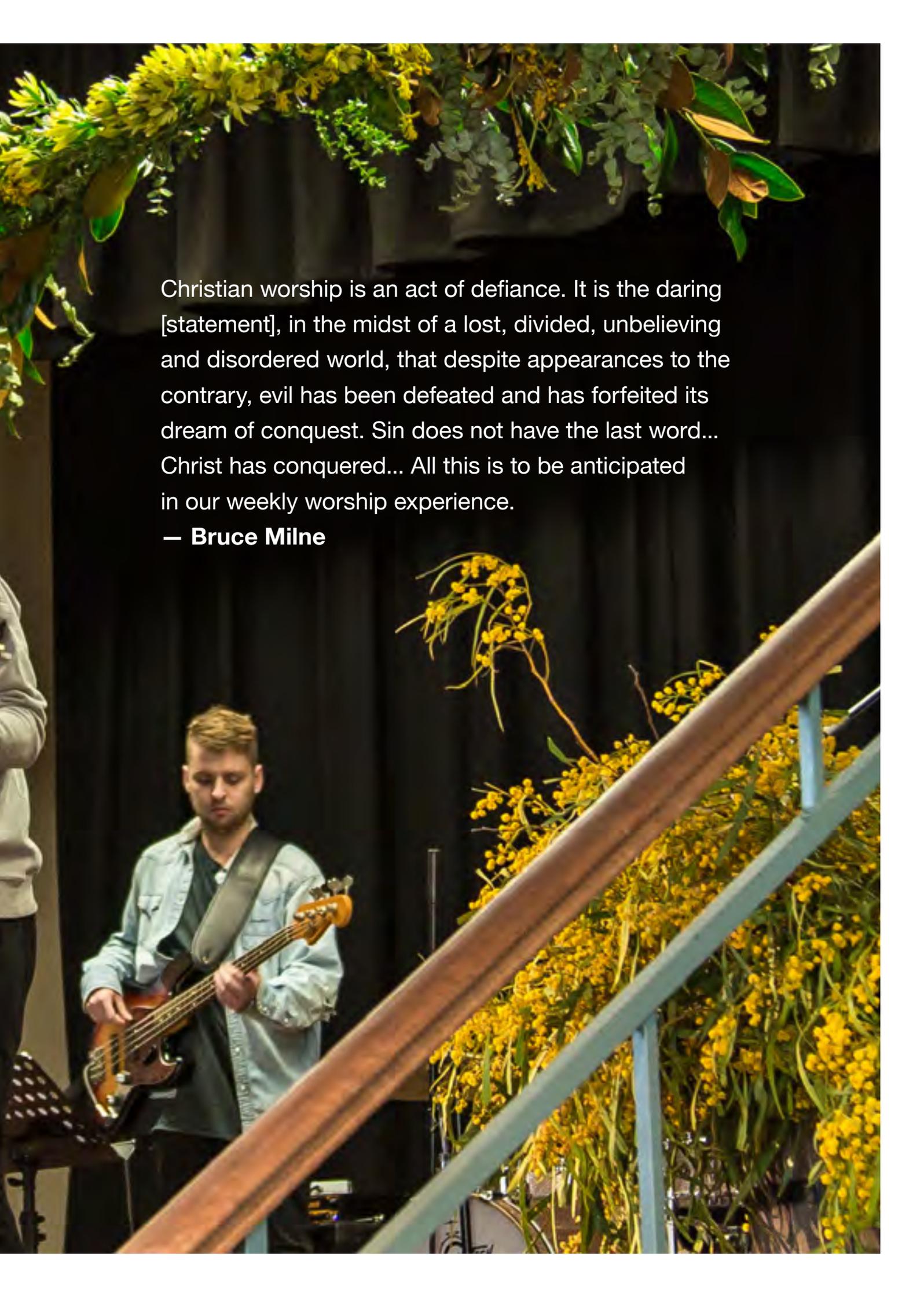
## Where are we going in 2017 and beyond?

- In 2017 Nate Singh will join the team to help us improve our Sunday gatherings so that people walk away having experienced the presence of God through preaching, prayer, and prophesy. Nate is a gifted musician and team leader who we are excited to have join us.
- We'd love to build a stronger culture of prayer at church by providing more opportunities to gather for prayer with others, and more resources to help you pray at home.

# Prayer & Praise Night Average Attendance







Christian worship is an act of defiance. It is the daring [statement], in the midst of a lost, divided, unbelieving and disordered world, that despite appearances to the contrary, evil has been defeated and has forfeited its dream of conquest. Sin does not have the last word... Christ has conquered... All this is to be anticipated in our weekly worship experience.

— **Bruce Milne**

# Ministry

*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)*

## What are we praying for?

A community of disciples who joyfully serve God and others by giving their time, talents and treasures.

## What did we do in 2016?

In 2016, we saw increasing numbers of volunteers courageously take the risk to start new ministries such as Made with Love, Playtime, the Bookstall, and Working Bees.

We've sought to improve our process of stepping people into ministry with a more organised placement system.

Our ministry trainee, Bob Beissmann pioneered our first **Ministry Fair**, which sought to raise the profile of the number of ways people can serve at church. We saw 48 people show interest in joining a team, 17 of whom had never served at church before.

We've continue to train the next generation of church leaders.

- Bob Beissmann took a year out of journalism to train as a **ministry intern** (MTS) under Andy Bryan. During this time, he led the team at Bread of Life, encouraged many men and women by reading the Bible and praying with them, and he studied the Bible through the Timothy Partnership.
- We also trained four passionate **Student Pastors** (Seb Lane, Brian Leung, Vanessa de Sauty, Luke Shooter) who combined their training at Bible College with practical ministry experience at our church.

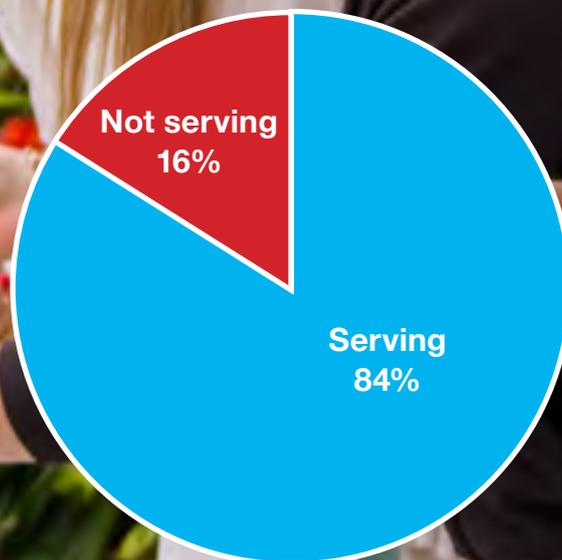
## Where are we going in 2017 and beyond?

- As we grow, we are still working to build a more organised system of finding and placing volunteers in ministries they can excel in. We think this will help people serve with joyful hearts as they build Jesus' kingdom.
- We're committed to raising up more and more leaders so that church is not run by the staff but the entire body. This will require greater training and clear lines of delegation.
- We're passionate about ensuring the next generations of churches have gifted and godly leaders, so we will continue to challenge specific people to give up their jobs to train for full-time ministry to others. In 2017 we will be training Becky Cox as a ministry intern (MTS) and Seb Lane, Brian Leung, Steph Leung and Simeon Cumberland as Student Pastors.

# 147

Volunteers at church

Proportion of members serving at church



# Membership

*In Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. . . [Therefore] love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. (Romans 12:5, 9-13)*

## What are we praying for?

A united and growing community who are functioning as members of one body and warmly connecting and caring for each other as family.

## What did we do in 2016?

In 2016 we brought on board Joel Hollier to oversee Membership (and Mission) full time. Joel continues to help us form a sense of connection after the recent merging of Vine Church + St Michael's. Praise God that the year concluded with two vibrant, healthy gatherings of one unified church.

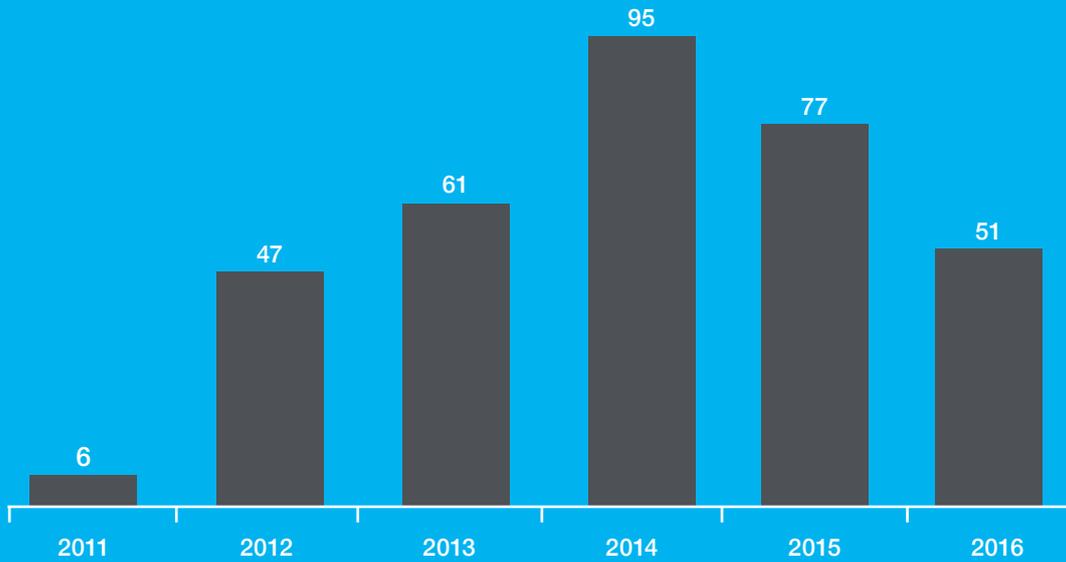
Over 2016, we sought to **connect** people to the life of our church through a range of initiatives including:

- Monthly **Newcomers Dinners** which continue to be run at Toby and Liz's home welcoming people to the church.
- **VineConnect**, a four-week membership course which was developed and saw 32 people go through over two series.
- A strong culture of welcoming, with people stepping up at both services to assist in this.

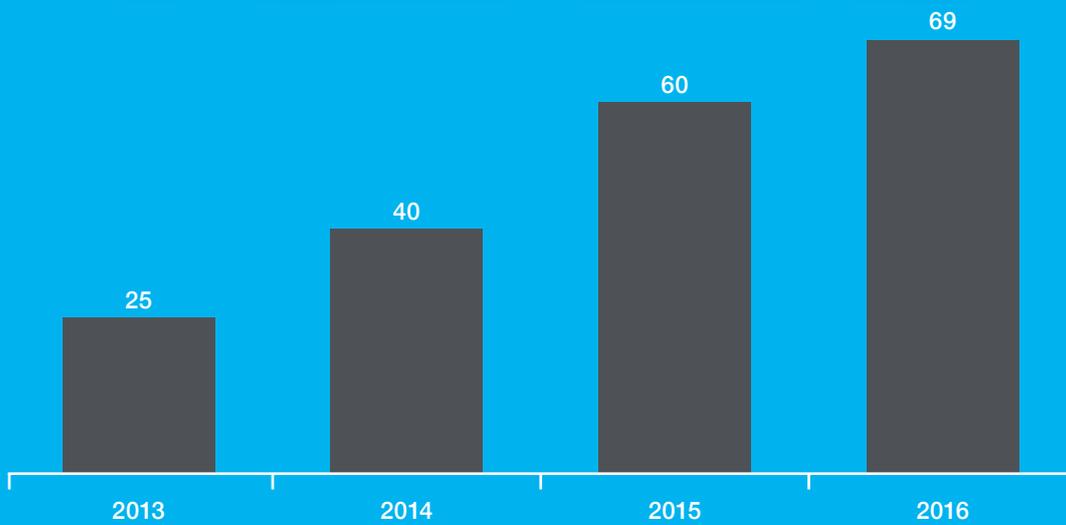
Over 2016, we sought to build **community** among our members through the Weekend Away, Man Camp, Girl's Getaway, Guess Who's Coming To Dinner and our annual Birthday celebration. We saw 62 people attend the Annual General Meeting, showing a degree of ownership over the running of our church. Additionally there has been an exciting growth of diversity, with people from many walks of life beginning to call Vine Church + St Michael's their home.

Over 2016, we sought to **care** for people who are doing it tough through phone calls, prepared dinners, pastoral counselling, practical support and prayer. Many of us were supported through relationship difficulties, job frustrations and job losses, mental health concerns, marriage breakdowns, a variety of temptations, death of loved ones, difficulties in having babies, navigation of diverse sexualities and gender concerns, loneliness and severe health trials. Hundreds of gospel conversations have been had as members of our church have cared for each other and called us to rely on Christ.

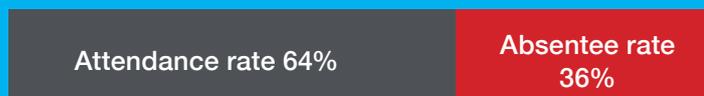
## Newcomers Dinner



## New People joined Community Groups



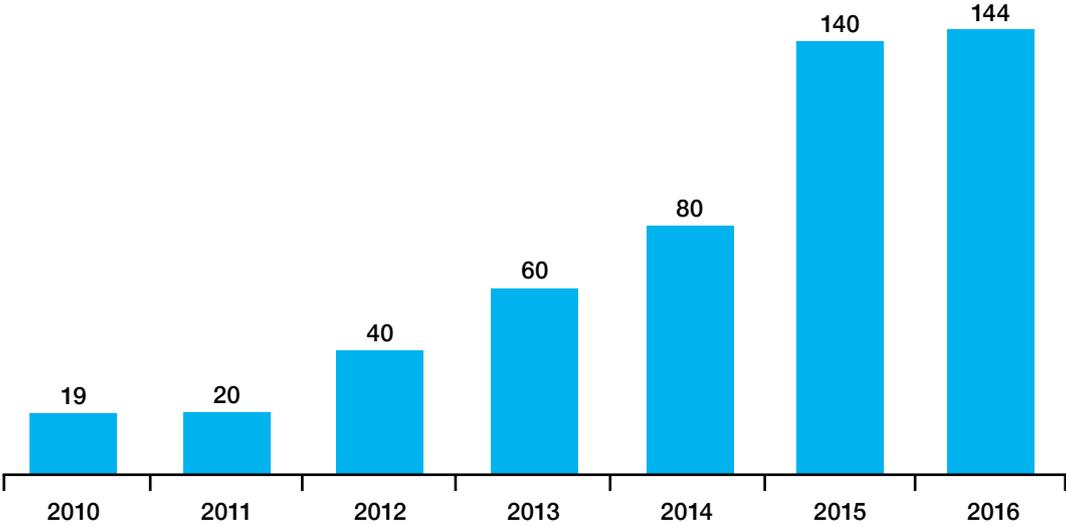
## Community Group Attendance Rate

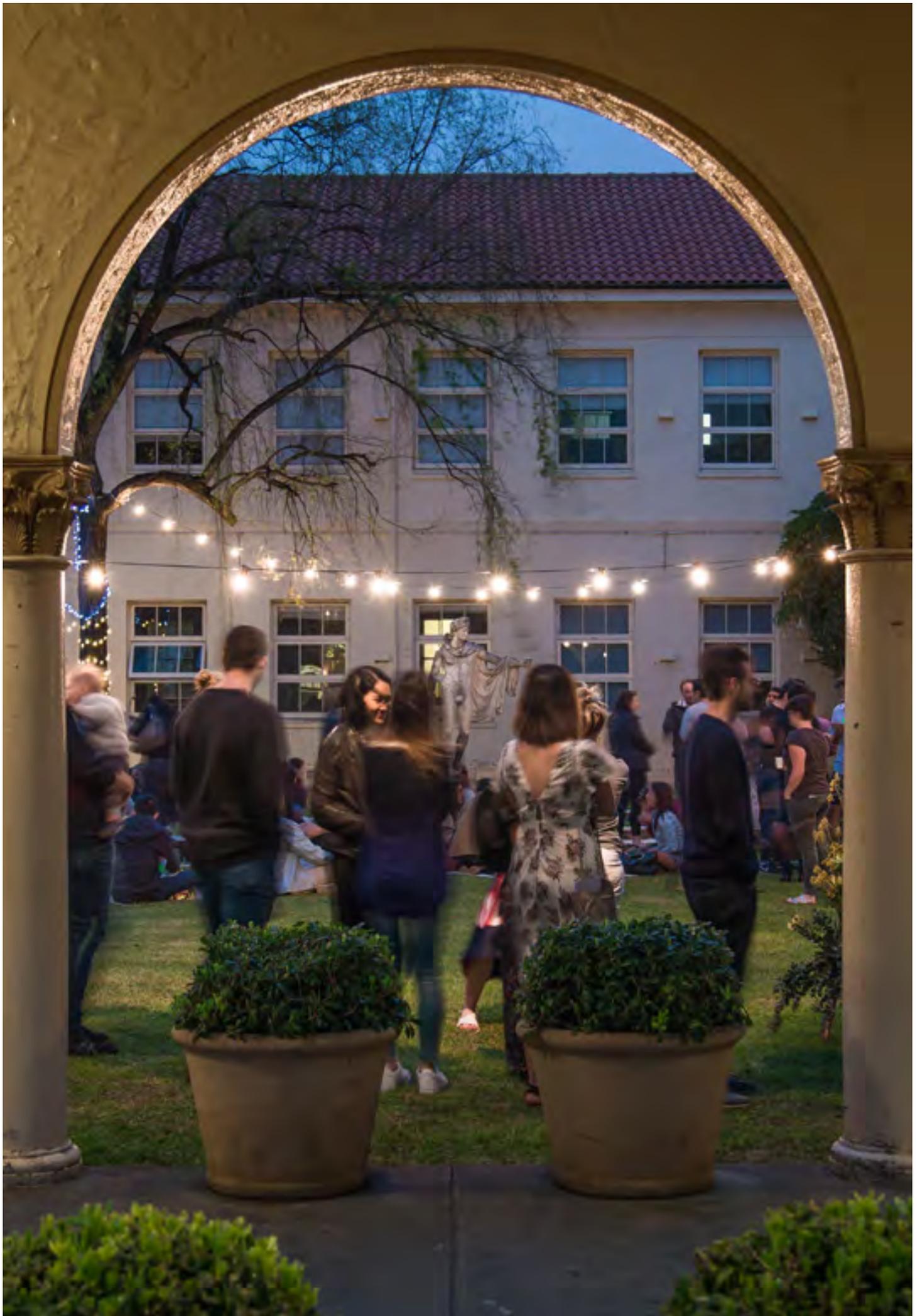


### Where are we going in 2017 and beyond?

- A greater emphasis on time together will see a greater number of both formal and informal gatherings taking place, especially as the church grows in size.
- A formalised buddy system of welcoming will seek to ensure that newcomers and those who are on the fringe are integrated effectively.
- Growing and equipping a team of passionate ‘connectors’ at each gathering to further develop a strong welcoming culture.
- Building a VineCare team to provide a more formalised system of care so that more of us are equipped to walk with others through their trials.
- Developing the church buildings and grounds to be conducive to greater community connectedness.

### People at Weekend Away





# Vine Kids

*Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these. (Matthew 19:14)*

## What are we praying for?

Hundreds of kids to join a Christ-centred program where they have a stack-load of fun getting to know the God who made them and saved them.

## What did we do in 2016?

In 2016 Vine Kids began to boom in the mornings with growing numbers of kids, a dedicated Vine Kids room and almost a full team of regular weekly teachers.

We built an outdoor playground in early 2016, which the kids love.

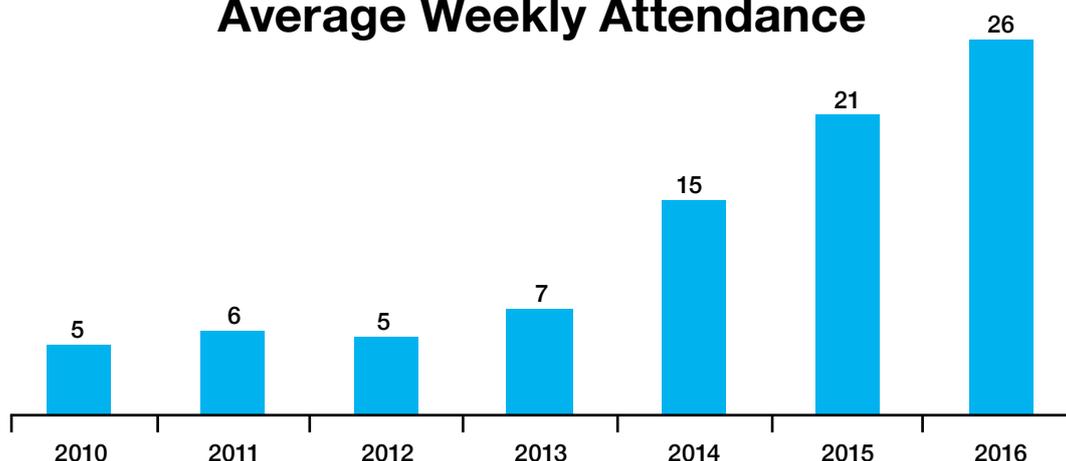
We started Playtime, a ministry for kids and their carers to make friends and enjoy time together. A number of non-church families join us regularly for this.

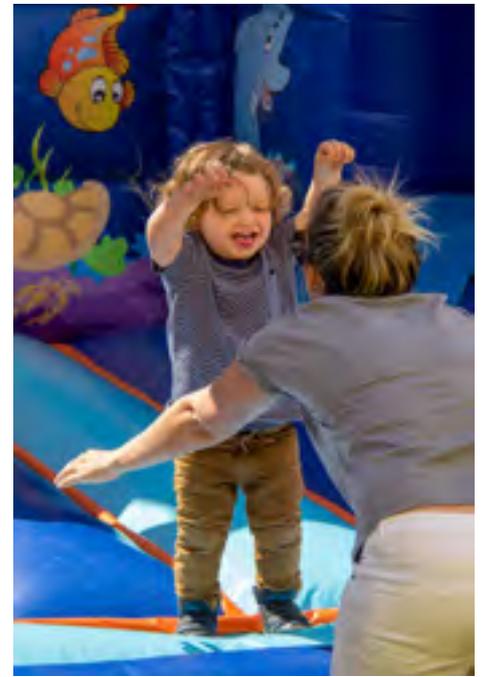
We taught **Special Religious Education** at two local primary schools, and ran Easter and Christmas assemblies for more than 200 students.

## Where are we going in 2017 and beyond?

- We are seeking to establish a full team of regular weekly Vine Kids teachers.
- We are seeking to start Vine Youth on Sunday mornings for years 5-8, and begin monthly midweek socials for this group.
- We are recruiting a Director of Children's Ministry to help equip our leaders to reach the kids of the city.
- We are starting an annual Parenting Enrichment Day to equip mums and dads to raise their kids in the fear of the Lord.
- We are planning an annual Vine Kids camp for years 3+, to take kids away to have a tonne of fun learning about Jesus.

## Average Weekly Attendance





# Sunday Gatherings

*Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.* (Hebrews 10:24–25)

Over 2016, a bunch of different people came together each week for three different gatherings at Vine Church + St Michael's.

## 10am

The 10am gathering built amazing momentum over the year and doubled in size. Some of this growth was from people transitioning from our 4.30pm gathering, but we also saw many others join us for the first time. We continue to see this gathering broaden in its demographic with people from every generation represented.

## 11.30am

Otherwise known as All Nations, the 11.30 gathering took the courageous leap of going out from us as an independent church plant this year under Pastor Isaac's leadership. We continue to support All Nations with encouragement and prayer, and by making our facilities available for them to use.

## 4.30pm

The 4.30pm gathering moved into St Michael's in late 2016 to experience the benefit of a permanent home. This is our largest gathering and is approaching capacity in the church building. We continue to see many young people come in and find genuine community here. The music is louder, the jeans skinner, and each week we go down to the pub for a meal and drink with each other.

## Planting new gatherings

Over 2017 we are looking to plant at least one new gathering to reach new tribes of people in our city, and alleviate some capacity issues at 4.30pm.

# Weekly Attendance

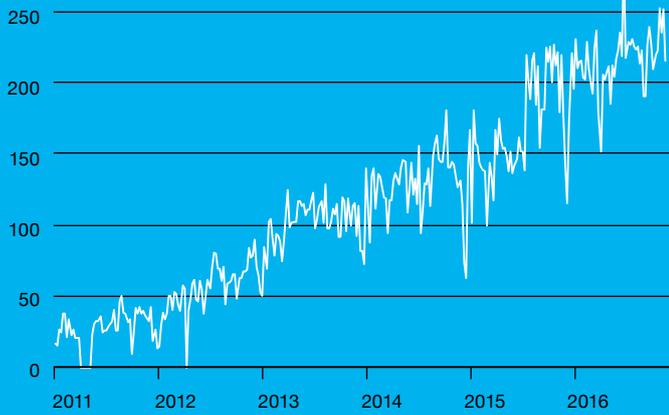
### 10am



### 4.30pm



### Historic Gathering Statistics



### Kids



# Staff Team

*Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you. (Hebrews 13:17)*

We are thankful for a gifted and dedicated staff team in 2016.

## 2016 Staff Team



**Toby Neal**  
*Lead Pastor*



**Andrew Bryan**  
*Maturity Pastor*



**Joel Hollier**  
*Mission & Membership Pastor*



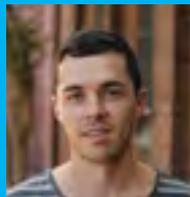
**Esther Neate**  
*Female City Pastor*



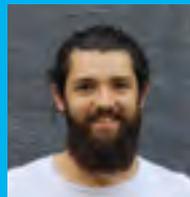
**Steph Toose\***  
*Female City Pastor*



**Isaac Min\***  
*Focus Pastor (All Nations)*



**Daniel May\***  
*Music Director*



**Bob Beissmann\***  
*Ministry Intern (MTS)*



**Luke Shooter\***  
*Magnification Pastor*



**Vanessa de Sauty\***  
*Student Minister*



**Seb Lane**  
*Student Minister*



**Brian Leung**  
*Student Minister*



**Meg Chatterton**  
*Church Administrator*



**Diane Marris\***  
*Parish Administrator*



**Hannah Janzen\***  
*Graphic Designer*



**Paulette Gray**  
*Bookkeeper*

(\* denotes outgoing)

## Incoming Staff 2017



**Simeon  
Cumberland**  
*Student Minister*



**Steph Leung**  
*Student Minister*



**Nate Singh**  
*Director of  
Gatherings*



**Becky Cox**  
*Ministry Intern  
(MTS)*

## Parish Council



**Justin Yoon**



**Alison Westbrook**



**Pei Li Guan**



**Mario Chan**



**Reena Chieng**  
*Treasurer  
(reports to Parish  
Council)*

## Wardens



**Alexis Linton**



**Pauline Oh**



**Mia Cox**

## Staff Changes

In 2016 we had a number of new staff join us in various capacities including, Andy Bryan, Joel Hollier, Esther Neate, Seb Lane, Brian Leung. We also brought on Meg Chatterton up to a full time position.

We also farewelled a number of staff, including:

- Diane Marris who retired as the St Michael's Parish Administrator after 13 years of faithful service
- Luke Shooter who moved for further training as an Anglican candidate while he trains at Moore Theological College
- Vanessa de Sauty who accepted a chaplain position at New England Girls School in Armidale
- Steph Toose who gave birth to Atticus and moved to New Zealand to be part of a team revitalising a church in Blenheim on the South Island
- Bob Beissmann who returned to work as a journalist
- Hannah Janzen who gave birth to Ollie and focused on her personal design studio

# Finances

*On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made . . . Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:7)*

It is an absolute privilege for Christians to be financial partners in the work of promoting the name of Jesus and caring for the poor. In the act of being generous we express our confidence that God has our backs. If we seek first his kingdom, he will take care of our needs.

Learning to become a regular and generous giver is part of learning to follow Jesus. In 1–2 Corinthians, the apostle Paul says our giving should be proportionate, regular, and cheerful.

- Your giving should be **regular**: “On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money.” Studies and common sense reveal that people who plan their giving to church and give it every month end up being far more generous than those who give irregularly or impulsively.
- Your giving should be **proportionate**: Not giving from the leftovers, but “... in keeping with your income.” That means that as God blesses you with more, you become more generous. Studies show that those on the lowest incomes are the most generous givers when their gift is expressed as a proportion of their income. It ought to be the reverse.
- Your giving should be **cheerful**: “... for God loves a cheerful giver.” Understanding the riches we have already received in Christ not only liberates us from excessive worry about wealth, but also motivates us to invest willingly in the eternal kingdom of God.

In 2016, your financial gifts were stewarded by the Parish Council, Wardens and Treasurer (see page 35).

Because we are committed to making disciples of Jesus who are devoted to our five purposes (Mission, Membership, Maturity, Ministry and Magnification), our annual budget reflects investment in each one of these five areas. Note that a fifth category has been added called Ministry Support and Property. This includes all other expenses which support the five purposes. E.g. insurance, administration staff, office supplies and property expenses.

In 2016, we raised \$9,863 for the Playground Appeal and \$20,086 toward our Christmas Offering which will support six different initiatives in 2016. Additionally, we gave over \$15,000 to mission organisations taking the gospel to the world.

## Ways to give



ST MICHAELS ANGLICAN CHURCH SURRY HILLS  
BSB: 062 033 | Account No: 1075 0624  
Reference: Please note the service you go to  
and your last name. E.g. 10am Smith



Credit / Debit Card  
[vinechurch.com.au/pay](http://vinechurch.com.au/pay)

## % of Family Units Giving

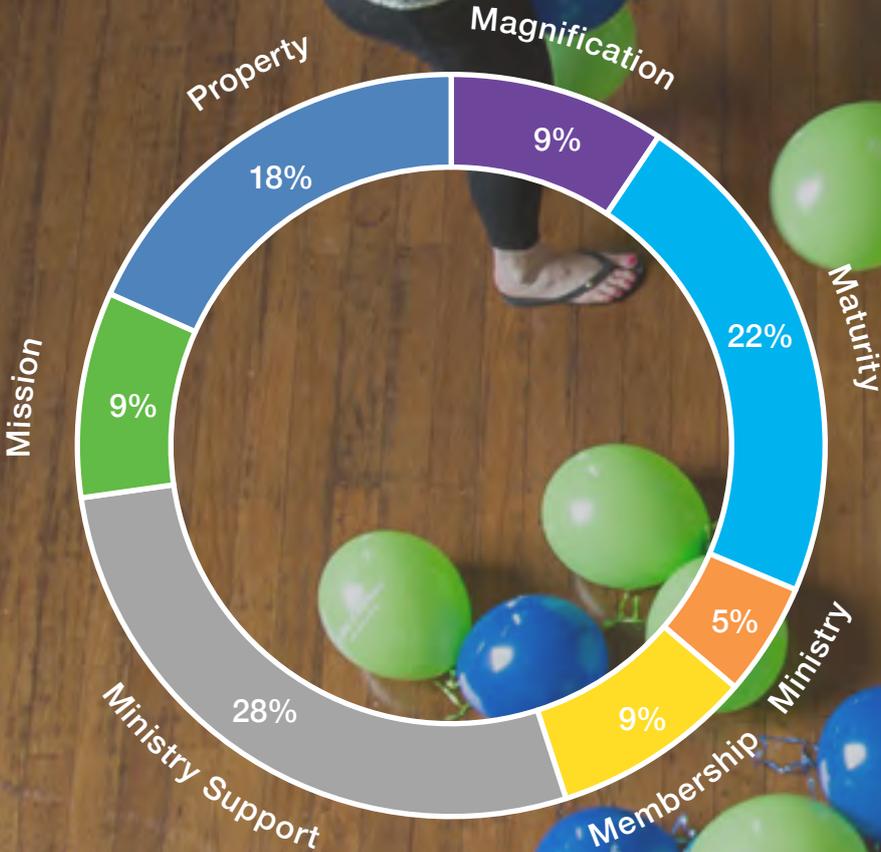


## Annual Internal Giving



**4.30pm** This includes historic Vine Church giving before the merger      **10am** This includes historic St Michael's giving before the merger      **Staff** This is the first year staff giving has been separated

# Breakdown of Expenses



# How can I be involved in 2017?

Thanks for taking the time to read through this report. I hope you've been moved to prayer and inspired to jump in as a fully devoted disciple of Jesus in 2016. If that's you, we'd love for you to commit to:

- Prioritising a daily time with God in His **word and prayer**;
- Attending a **Sunday gathering** and your **Community Group** weekly;
- Making an effort to **encourage** your brothers and sisters throughout the week;
- Be bold in **sharing your faith** with family, friends and co-workers;
- Coming along to the **Weekend Away** in March ([vinechurch.com.au/weekendaway](http://vinechurch.com.au/weekendaway));
- **Giving sacrificially** ([vinechurch.com.au/give](http://vinechurch.com.au/give)); and
- **Serving with a glad heart** in a variety of practical ways ([vinechurch.com.au/serve](http://vinechurch.com.au/serve)).

If you're not sure where to start, why not make a time to sit down with one of our amazing pastors and ask them to help you begin a life as a fully devoted disciple of Jesus.

- Prioritising a daily time with God in His **word and prayer**;
- Attending a **Sunday gathering** and your **Community Group** weekly;
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**VINE CHURCH  
+ ST MICHAEL'S**

Sundays 10am, 4.30pm  
St Michael's Anglican Church  
200 Albion St, Surry Hills

Photo credits  
Rune Svendsen (@svendsania)  
Rob Alexander