

Acacia Ridge Baptist Church

50 Year Celebration

17 September, 1966 -
17 September, 2016

Anniversary Service
23 October, 2016

www.arbaptist.org.au



Opening and Dedication

of

**Acacia Ridge
Baptist Church**

Cur. Watson Road and Chardean Street

by

Rev. V. C. BOWRING, L.Th.

The President of the Baptist Union of Queensland

on

SATURDAY, 17th SEPTEMBER, 1966

at 2.30 p.m.

Pastor: S. W. SOLOMON, B.Sc., A.Ed.

Acting-Secretary: Mr. J. CAVANOUGH

Acting-Treasurer: Mr. H. W. DIECKMANN

Hon Architect:
Mr. G. N. EDWARDS, Dip. Arch., A.R.A.I.A.

Builder:
Mr. F. WEST

PREFACE

There are many reflections in this booklet about the men and women who have served the Lord over the last 50 years through Acacia Ridge Baptist Church. Each reflection is a person's testimony of their relationship with God and how He has connected with them through this fellowship of believers over the decades. Some have spent many years in this congregation, and some a few, but God was with each one no matter how much time they were here for.

The purpose of Acacia Ridge Baptist Church has not changed in the fifty years. The church still exists to bring glory and honour to our Lord Jesus Christ, to edify His followers, and make disciples and baptise them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Please pray that the congregations, both present and future will continue to stand firm in the gospel. To God be the glory.

I would also at this point like to thank those who have spent a great deal of time and energy in putting this booklet together. Thank you to each one.

Paul Ryttersgaard
Pastor

ACACIA RIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH CONGREGATION

“What will the Church of the future be? We believe that as the Lord guides us, we will see the erection and growth of a large church within the immediate vicinity which will minister to the large and dramatic expansion of the population about to occur over the next ten to twenty years leading into the twenty-first century.”

Quotation from church document around the time of commencement of the Algester Church

OUR PASTORS OVER THE YEARS

Stan Solomon	1966-1969	
Wayne Weiler	1969-1971	
A. John Munday	1972-1980	
D.C MacDonald	1978-	(associate)
J.H. Smart	1978-	(associate)
Martin Clarke	1979-1980	(associate)
Richard Lawler	1980-1989	
Malcolm Hall		(associate)
Gary Woolnough		(associate)
Phillip Gunton	1989-2007	
David Stevens	2007-2009	
Graham Edgar	2009-2013	
David McMahon	2013-2015	
Paul Ryttersgaard	2015-PRESENT	

2016 CELEBRATION

This publication to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the official opening of the Acacia Ridge Baptist Church on 17 September 1966, is compiled using material from the Queensland Baptist Union Archives in Brisbane, our original church records, Coopers Plains Local Area History Collec-

tion at Coopers Plains Library, and the kind contributions of various individuals, many of whom make up past and present church congregations.

EARLY HISTORY OF ACACIA RIDGE AND ACACIA RIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH

God's blessing in the lives of people who have been part of the Acacia Ridge Baptist Church over 50 years, and the story of the church itself, is reflected in the diverse social origins of the suburb, and the multicultural character of the church today. Around ten different nationalities make up the current congregation. In addition, the "Little Flock Worship Centre" as well as the Tongan congregation also regularly use the church building.

When the Acacia Ridge Baptist Church was established in late 1966, on the corner of Chardean Street and Watson Road, it was built on land that had once been traditional tribal territory of the Jagera people, a local Aboriginal population who once lived in the area by hunting, gathering and fishing on the fertile plains near Oxley Creek and other freshwater lagoons or waterways. Their original language is evident in many place names on the south side of Brisbane. The Aborigines' presence in the area that eventually became Acacia Ridge was noted by early European explorers such as Tom Petrie and John Oxley.

From 1824, Brisbane Town was a penal settlement, so the first tentative European presence near what would become Acacia Ridge was due to convict labourers. They carved out a rough form of a road leading south to the emerging township of Beaudesert. Early pioneer settlers in the area permanently altered its environmental landscape and racial character. In the early nineteenth-century, the future Acacia Ridge was merely one of several south side

suburbs that were collectively called Cowper's Plains (eventually spelled Coopers Plains). Patrick Logan, one of the first Europeans to come into this region, named it in honour of his friend, Assistant Surgeon Henry Cowper.

The end of Brisbane as a penal colony in 1842 opened up Cowper's Plains to free settlement. By the 1840s, a small number of European farmers worked the area, and exploited it for grazing livestock, or growing maize, cotton and sugar cane. At that time, the present-day Archerfield Aerodrome on part of Beatty Road just off the boundary of Acacia Ridge was covered with trees. One of the first European immigrants to settle in the area was the Freney family from Ireland, who purchased 56 acres near Oxley Creek in 1851, and established a productive sawmill there. The Freney family later lost their family sawmill in the great flood of 1893. It was never rebuilt.

The historic God's Acre Pioneer Cemetery, located today on Beatty Road at Archerfield, was originally the burial plot of the Grenier family who had a large property on the site of the aerodrome. In 1859, they buried their son Volney after he died while fox-hunting.

In 1898, the modern-day Acacia Ridge suburb was given this name because of the thick clusters of acacia trees that grew there. Around this time, at the opposite end of Chardean Street to where the Baptist Church is now, Mrs. Olive Drew operated as the postmistress, for which she was paid 6 pounds per year. A post box was situated on the fence of her house. She held the position of postmistress for a period of 49 years. By 1913, a quarry existed near the site of the present aerodrome, but it became unusable when an underground natural spring filled it with water. Local schools soon used it for swimming classes. During the 1920s

and 1930s, dairy and poultry farming, and the growing of small crops, were important industries around Acacia Ridge.

In 1928, an important development occurred on the edge of Acacia Ridge when the aerodrome was established at Archerfield. Three years later, Qantas built Queensland's largest aircraft hangar there. The famous Brisbane aviatrix Lores Bonney left from there on record-breaking flights, including the first by a woman around Australia in 1932, and the first woman to fly from Australia to England the following year.



View of Acacia Ridge from above Archerfield.

From "Australia @ War" www.ozatwar.com, used by permission.

After the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbour in December 1941, Archerfield Aerodrome became a vital military base for Australian Dutch American and British forces. The RAAF had a camp on the corner of Mortimer and Beatty Roads, the very edge of Acacia Ridge. Not far from where the Baptist Church is today, just down Watson Road and across Mortimer, marginally outside the suburb, was the United States Air Force. War had come to Acacia Ridge, and the American servicemen there were part of the massive U.S. military contingent stationed in Brisbane from early 1942. The city was also subjected to air raid warnings which made the population extremely apprehensive. During the war, celebrities also came to Acacia Ridge, at least to nearby Archerfield. American General Douglas MacArthur, commander-in-chief of the South West Pacific, had established headquarters at Brisbane's AMP Building. In 1944, his wife Jean pulled on her best gloves and fashionable veiling trim hat to officially greet United States First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt whose flight landed at the aerodrome.

Once World War Two ended, agriculture around Acacia Ridge began to be replaced by manufacturing industry. By far, the dominant employer in the area was the General Motors Holden 17.5 million dollar assembly plant which began production there in March 1966. It was the most modern of this type of factory in Australia. A significant amount of public housing was built around the suburb to provide accommodation for workers. Many of them were assisted immigrants from Great Britain, the Ukraine, Poland and Croatia who lived locally amongst the indigenous descendants of the original Aboriginal people who occupied Acacia Ridge.



The present Acacia Ridge Baptist Church building was opened on 17 September 1966, and formally constituted as the 106th Baptist Church of the Baptist Union of Queensland on 12 February 1967.

Acacia Ridge Baptist Church began its journey in February 1966. Its establishment was a decision of the Home Mission Department of the Baptist Union under the auspices of Vic Bowring and was funded largely by them. Three families from Salisbury Baptist Church were the founding members, Ian and Emilia Campbell, Mr & Mrs Cavanagh, and Mr & Mrs Dieckmann.

The church was the first pastorate of a young Bible college student, Stan Solomon, who came with his wife Nell and their children. Stan had been a high school teacher for the ten years prior. The church initially met in a Girl Guide hall. A tent was set up each Sunday beside the hall to aid with Sunday School classes. The Wallin family in Watson Road also appear to have provided their garage for the same purpose. The present building on the corner of Watson

Road and Chardean Street was built towards the end of 1966, and Pastor Solomon moved into the manse next door to the church in 1967.



Bible meeting in the church hall

The main emphasis on building the church by way of numbers was to focus on the youth. Religious Education was conducted in the school. This was followed by parent visitation, general door knocks and outreach programmes for school children. Stan Solomon has stated that two areas which were key in establishing the church were prayer and visitation. It is worth highlighting here the simple "formula" that was used for establishing the church was (1) prayer to God (2) meeting people (3) winning them to Christ, and (4) building them up into faithful disciples by teaching them

the Word of God. These simple strategies worked, and unsaved people were converted and established in Christ.

Towards Pastor Lawler's goal of establishing a work in Algester, the name of the Church was changed to "The Acacia Ridge District Baptist Church", broadening its focus. In 1984, two properties adjacent to the Acacia Ridge Church which had been purchased were sold to purchase a new manse on Algester Road. The leadership of the Algester work was given to Malcolm Hall who was an Associate Pastor at Acacia Ridge at this time. The Algester services were conducted in the downstairs of the manse in Algester Road. The Algester property was eventually sold, and funds used to re-purchase a manse in Phaius St, Acacia Ridge.

Despite its small size, the church has always had a keen interest in missions, showing this by regular financial support of various Christian groups and organisations and has been a witness in the area for many years. Many people have come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, many have been baptised, and many have re-dedicated their lives to Christ. Many people who have passed through the church have in turn been used by God to bring others to Christ.

Yes, the church is small, but the Acacia Ridge Baptist Church is still God's church! What the future holds for the church is up to God as He works in His church and through His people.



Willing helpers in the church kitchen before its renovation

MEMORIES OF ACACIA RIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH BY FOUNDING MEMBER EMILIA CAMPBELL

The Baptist Union of Queensland had the vision to begin a Baptist Church in the Acacia Ridge area. A young Pastor Stan Solomon came to our front door one evening 1965, enquiring as to whether Ian and I would be prepared to work with him in the Acacia Ridge District. Ian and I were members of the Salisbury Baptist Church at the time. Ian was the organist for the Salisbury Baptist Church, and had joined the Salisbury Boys Brigade. He and I were both teaching Sunday School and we sang in the church Choir.

Consequently, we prayerfully decided to join Pastor Solomon and went door knocking in the district inviting folk to join our church. A fellowship was officially formed late 1965

and our services were held in the Girl Guides Hut on Mortimer Road. Land was purchased towards the end of 1965. Plans for a church building were being drawn up and quotes soon followed. If I remember correctly, Frank West was the Builder and Sam Heyburn the bricklayer.



The new church was officially opened on 17th September, 1966, by Mr. Vic Bowring. The building was packed to capacity with the emerging church fellowship, visitors from local churches, families of members and well-wishers. It was a very grand occasion for Acacia Ridge. I remember particularly how wonderful it was to hear the hymns of praise that rang out that day to the Glory of God for the testimony this church will hold faithfully witnessing and serving in this local community.

It wasn't very long before Pastor Solomon had a thriving Young People's Group held every Saturday evening promoting Christ's teachings and engaging in outdoor activities. Sunday School classes were held every Sunday for local children. This was a result of door knocking and reaching the lost in the Acacia Ridge area. Sunday School picnics were wonderful family days when we met many parents. We also visited the parents. Pastor Solomon visited every house in Acacia Ridge.

Acacia Ridge Baptist Church has been blessed for many years and stands as a testimony to the reality of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Kingdom. May His Kingdom come and His will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

"It was noted that some Students were without Bibles. These could be bought from the Baptist Bookstore at a cost of 85 cents and the cost to each scholar being 40 cents thus leaving the Sunday School the cost of 45 cents on each Bible". – Acacia Ridge Baptist Sunday School Minute Book, 19 April 1967.

CHURCH PASTORS OVER THE YEARS

STAN SOLOMON – FIRST PASTOR, 1966 - 1969, AND WIFE NELL

Fifty years ago this last February [2016], I entered the Baptist ministry as a student pastor. My first assignment was to commence a church at Acacia Ridge. What to do? We had 2 or 3 willing families from Salisbury church that formed the first congregation.

Each Sunday we would pick up chairs from Upper Mt. Gravatt Church, erect a tent for Sunday school on the Girl

Guide property in Mortimer Road, then hold service in the Guide hut. We letterboxed, door-knocked and visited interested people. The Lord blessed the ministry and as in the book of Acts He “added to our numbers such as were being saved”.



The Home Mission Department financed the building of the church later that year and the manse on the adjoining block early in 1967. Everybody pitched in to build furniture, tables, chairs and cupboards. We were a great team. Later we started home groups, women’s ministry, Girls’ and Boys’ Brigades.

After 4 years, at the end of 1969, I was most disappointed to be moved by the Home Mission (those were the days when Student Pastors were assigned rather than called by the church) to Dinmore. I can’t remember all the fine detail but do recall the membership at that time was 46, the Sunday School was a very large entity and both the morning and evening congregations on Sundays were about 100 in each.

I and my family could not have been more thrilled by such a happy introduction to ministry life and to have known and worked with such a loving church family.

WAYNE WEILER, SECOND PASTOR, 1969 – 1971

“Our Sunday School at Acacia Ridge has now reached its sixth year of activity. In the first two years of 1966 and 1967 we were fortunate to have a period of unbridled monopoly in Sunday School building in this district of new housing suburbia. Very active visitation by the Solomons, Grahams, Timms’, and other families gave an enrolment of over 200, and taxed to the extreme our church hall and manse accommodation”. Acacia Ridge Baptist Sunday School Annual Report for 1970/71.

DR A. JOHN MUNDAY, THIRD PASTOR, 1972-1980, AND WIFE EFFIE

After settling into his temporary position as lecturer at Mt. Gravatt College of Advanced Education, John offered his services as volunteer worker-pastor for Acacia Ridge Baptist Church and it was gladly accepted. The [Munday] family would live in the Manse next to the church but before informing the church, John and I agreed we should wait until Stephanie was willing to live in ‘that house that looks like a gaol’... to share in the life of a tiny church, such a contrast with what we’d experienced in Kentucky. She thought and prayed about it and finally told her father, ‘Yes Dad, I’m willing’. Ruth’s heart seemed ready from the start. So the church that couldn’t afford a pastor got four workers, John Effie, Ruth and Stephanie. The father preached and led the flock. Effie led the women’s work and they all taught Sunday School classes and the girls served on piano and organ. The story of our eight and a half years at The Ridge would fill a book!

Reproduced with kind permission from Effie Munday, Recollections & Collections: A Divinely Navigated Odyssey, Book Pal: 2014, p.148.

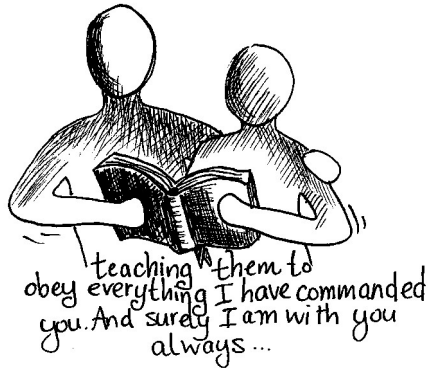
“Decided to cancel Picnic on 29th May but to hold a function at the Church, 1-30 to 4-30 pm, on 26th June and provide afternoon tea. This function to be for Kindy, Primary & Juniors but Young People to be invited to organise games for the children thus enabling Teachers to speak to parents”. Acacia Ridge Baptist Sunday School Minute Book, 16 May 1976.

RUTH HEPPELL (DAUGHTER OF JOHN & EFFIE MUNDAY)

Our family moved into 86 Chardean Street, Acacia Ridge in May 1972, when Dad began his ministry as a part-time pastor of Acacia Ridge Baptist Church. I would live in Acacia Ridge until I finished university and began teaching in January 1978.

Mum and Dad would stay in ministry there until the end of 1980.

One of my earliest memories of living in the manse is of children playing soccer in the church parking lot. Often we would hear the loud bang of the ball bouncing on the flat roof of the manse. Then we would see a small body shinning up our drain pipe, followed by the thump, thump, thump of him walking over our roof to retrieve the ball. “Were we living in the middle of the local soccer stadium?” we wondered.



That was the year I did Year 11 and turned 16. With a very small youth group, I became secretary of the youth committee. Along with two other Year 11's, one of whom is now Rev. Stephen Ball, and under the watchful eye of Dad and some other adults, we organised camps, outings, youth exchanges and regular programs. Later, interns from the Baptist College led our youth group.

Perhaps my best memory of the youth ministry at 'the Ridge', was our coffee houses. We would move outside all the church pews, and place the communion table and pulpit in the kitchen area at the back of the church. Posters and decorations were put on the wall and coloured light bulbs replaced the white ones. We served rather ordinary instant coffee, and just as ordinary Arnotts biscuits, but we usually had a live Christian band, and the church was mostly full when we had these events. Kids came in off the streets, sometimes still smoking, and sometimes bringing in their Bacardi, or being the worse for the alcohol they had already consumed outside. The band would play a bracket of songs followed by a speaker who would speak for about five minutes, finishing with a question meant to stim-

ulate discussion around the tables. We would follow this cycle three times in the night.

I learnt so much about living as a disciple of Jesus Christ in my time at the Ridge. I learnt to respect people from other cultures. In those days Acacia Ridge was full of English, Scottish, and Irish migrants, but also Spanish, Dutch, and even Chilean. I learnt to admire people who lived life on very limited incomes. I learnt from the coffee houses, how to share my relationship with Jesus around the tables, and how to have the courage to walk out onto the street inviting people to come in. I learnt what hard work it is to disciple people who come to Christ. I experienced the deep disappointment and grief of seeing people turn away from the Lord. Most of all, I learnt the importance and power of prayer. One of my best memories is of half nights of prayer, with 20 to 30 people gathered at the church praying in small groups until late into the night. Perhaps the most treasured memory is of kneeling behind the pulpit praying with my mother one Saturday afternoon.

Is it any wonder that I chose to be married in that little, not-very-picturesque church when I was married in August 1980? It was my spiritual home, and would turn out to be my training field for life.

"We are delighted to find Dr. Munday and his wife and two daughters keenly at work in our Sunday School so early in this new ministry among us. Our thanks to God for enabling the musical talents of sisters Ruth and Stephanie Munday, to be placed in service for the honour and glory of His precious name". Acacia Ridge Baptist Annual Report for 1971/72.

MARTIN CLARK, ASSOCIATE PASTOR, 1979-1980, AND WIFE VAL

Acacia Ridge Baptist Church was Martin's first experience of youth pastoring, my first experience of being a pastor's wife. It was a steep learning curve for us both as we struggled with new roles, theological studies, meeting new people, making new friends, settling into a new community and new home, being parents, being pregnant, having a second child, being sleep deprived and later, having Martin's parents live with us while their house was being built.

In the midst of all that life, supported by Jack and Effie, ARBC was a great experience.

On the first Sunday we were pounded. This was a tradition Jack and Effie brought back from the US. We were deeply touched as we went out to the front of the church, were introduced to the congregation and received boxes and bags of groceries for our pantry.



The youth group was accepting, young, energetic, generous and yes, more than a little bit crazy. One birthday Martin was kidnapped, blindfolded, bound and bundled into a car for youth group fun. At a bad taste birthday party Martin dressed up as a bearded pregnant woman and I was a wharfie, there is a photo somewhere...

Our first Christmas at ARBC, away from our Adelaide family, Jack and Effie invited us into their home and the experience of Sausage Cake.

Despite some scepticism from the leadership, the women started a Craft Group (very avant-garde in the early 80s). I enjoyed making new friends as well as teaching tie dye, batik and macrame. It was wonderful to see non churched people come and non craftys like Rose sitting alongside these women building friendships.

Martin went on to pastor in Queensland and South Australia before retraining as a teacher. He's "retired" now. I still teach part time. We are both members of Cornerstone Community and live on the Cornerstone property Burra-badine, just outside of Dubbo, NSW.

Congratulations to past and present congregations of ARBC for making 50 years.

RICHARD LAWLER, FOURTH PASTOR, 1980-1989, AND WIFE JUDY

The suburb of Acacia Ridge in the eighties was the most underprivileged ward in the greater Brisbane area, with the highest percentage of Social Security recipients, and no associated services. Despite this, the church itself comprised people of wonderful character, spirituality and warmth.

There was an excellent relationship and cooperation between the local churches, one example being the establishment of the Home and Community Care program. This was initially at the instigation of one of our deacons. A number of churches joined in pursuing the development of this project, working together to bring it to fruition.

Acacia Ridge, by its nature, was a transitional suburb – with many people living there temporarily, while establishing themselves financially and then moving on to more socially upward districts. For this reason, while there were many conversions, over the years other churches became the beneficiaries. The long term members were a great source of stability in this context.

One of the highlights in this respect was the Bill Newman crusade at the Mt Gravatt Showgrounds. For a church of around 50 membership, around a dozen conversions among both youth and adults was a strong response, but this was only possible because of the members who were involved in inviting and nurturing those who came.

Thank you to those who were regular participants in the weekly prayer meetings and Bible studies.

It is remarkable that in a church of this size, so many opportunities were taken by the members to reach the community through such groups as Ladies Craft, KYB (Know Your Bible), Girls Brigade, Church camps (which non-believers attended), men's fishing trips, youth camps and Go-Kart club, and an after school Kids Club. (One of the young lads who became a Christian through this ministry died soon after in a tragic road accident).

Underlying much of the spiritual development of individuals were the home/growth groups, where people learned it was OK to share their hurts and hopes, to encourage and disciple one another.

These were people who despite hardship, struggles with finance, health and relationships, worked through these to find the blessings of the Lord.

“During this year the ladies’ craft group conducted a stall at Elizabeth Street Shopping Centre, offering for sale items that had been made by the Craft Ladies”. Annual Report of Acacia Ridge Baptist Women's Fellowship for 1980/81.

PHILLIP GUNTON, FIFTH PASTOR, 1989 – 2007, AND WIFE SUE



Greetings to the Acacia Ridge Baptist Church on its 50th Anniversary.

It's pleasing to know the Church has reached 50 years in witness to the community, and that it is now prospering un-

der new leadership, as for a long time it seemed as though God may have been closing the Church down with people moving away and very few coming to replace them. Regrettably, this also meant that over the years various ministries of the Church changed, with some gradually ceasing due to lack of leadership as well as diminishing numbers, particularly the children.

By the grace of God however the faithful few persevered, and through their support and prayer the Church carried on with worship services and other outreach activities, even while other new churches started up and seemed to prosper, but then faded away. We were also blessed in being able to continue supporting Gary & Ruth Weston in their ministry as OMF missionaries to Japan.

Perhaps because we were comparatively few in number there was a great family atmosphere, and I thank God for the fellowship we enjoyed, and for His love and grace enabling us to continue for 18 years while people came, and went. However, as I approached 70 years of age it was time to go, experiencing sadness but also a sense of relief at others taking up the reins of leadership.

All the members of the Church, especially over the last few years, were a great help to Sue and I, and we hesitate to name those of most help and blessing for fear of missing someone out, but their faithfulness and encouragement over the years, and their continuing friendship, is a great joy to us.

May the Church continue to experience God's blessing, be faithful in witness to the community, and may your services always enable those who come to truly worship and

to learn and be encouraged from the exposition of God's Word.

DAVID STEVENS, SIXTH PASTOR, 2007-2009, AND WIFE MARY



After several decades in Airline and Tourism management around the world, I was called into ministry in Queensland and attended Queensland Baptist Theological College, to complete my B.Min. qualifications. In 2007, I was called to Acacia Ridge Baptist Church (with my wife, Mary) to fill the vacancy of Pastor. Previously I had ministered at Ballina and South Brisbane Baptist Churches. Mary and I enjoyed our ministry at ARBC immensely, in large part because of the friendliness of the whole congregation, who all shared a common cause – to proclaim the Gospel of salvation to the whole community of Acacia Ridge. May the next fifty years of ministry by ARBC be blessed mightily as you remain faithful to Him and in His service.

GRAHAM EDGAR, SEVENTH PASTOR, 2009-2013, AND WIFE CAROL

Carol and I had previously spent many years overseas serving in Thailand with the Australian Baptist Missionary Society, now Global Interaction and this was followed by some years in South Australia where I was appointed Director of Global Missions. On moving to Queensland I spent 18 months as Interim Senior Pastor at the Ipswich Baptist Church. In 2009 we visited Acacia Ridge and were excited at the possibilities of working in such a multicultural area. Sensing God's leading, a 3-month interim pastoral position was negotiated with the Acacia Ridge Baptist Church. This time was extended and I eventually retired in March 2013.



Carol and I have many happy memories of our time at Acacia Ridge. One of the early tasks was to improve and update the building to make more space available for ministry. The store room was cleared out to make an office, a kitchen was installed, the walls painted and floor tiled

which created space for Sunday School and eventually a Community Pantry which fed hundreds in the neighbourhood each week. Fans and industrial fridge and freezer were obtained through community grants and this ministry was managed efficiently by Barbara Roche for some years, with assistance from volunteers from the church and local community. Morning tea after Sunday service became a weekly time of fellowship and barbecues were held monthly in an effort to reach out to the community. For a while gazebos were set up outside for shelter, but a more permanent solution was later achieved when the outside undercover area was built to provide shelter from the sun and rain. Church services were greatly improved with the addition of a data projector gifted by an anonymous donor.

Sunday morning services continued with the addition of a Sunday School. Highlights of the year were Easter and Christmas services when the congregation joined with the Tongan and African congregations. The ARBC choir sang at Sunday services and at the local Christmas community celebrations. Prayer meetings were started with pizza on Tuesday evenings. Some of the church folk visited the local Nursing Home on a monthly basis to share God's love. There was also a ministry at the Acacia Ridge Community Centre with weekly English/Citizenship classes for migrants.



I would like to thank all those who served the Lord at ARBC during this time in music ministry, teaching, volunteering at Community Pantry and maintaining the property. I would like to especially acknowledge David Campbell as an efficient secretary and friend who worked hard with me in many of the practical tasks as well being a source of support and encouragement.

During this time we strived to honour Christ by faithfully preaching the Word of God and praying for those in need from within the congregation, local community and overseas. We thank God for the privilege of being part of the Acacia Ridge Baptist Church for this time.

**DAVID MCMAHON, EIGHTH PASTOR, 2013-2015,
AND WIFE LYNDA**



The Lord confirmed our call to Acacia Ridge Baptist Church through Isaiah 42:6. God indeed lead us by His right

hand as we began our journey with the Acacia Ridge family in March 2013. We praise God for the privilege of growing together and reaching out to the community. From the Community Kitchen, basketball in the local park, church BBQs, Homework Club , youth group and Ladies' Fellowship Group we experienced many joys, blessings and challenges- growth times.

Many highlights come to mind - baptisms of young African ladies, ladies' retreat, the growth of the youth, after-church birthday celebrations, combined Easter worship and lunch with the Congolese and Tongan congregations, and the promotion to Glory of two dear godly men. Acacia Ridge taught us the true meaning of genuine love and care which honours our Heavenly Father. It was such a privilege to serve at Acacia Ridge.

PAUL RYTTERSGAARD, NINTH PASTOR, 2015 - CURRENT

Cassandra and I came to the Acacia Ridge Baptist Church early in 2013. We were living in Annerley at the time and were considering a move to the Wynnum area as we would soon need to vacate the home we were renting. We prayed and visited churches in the Bayside Region but did not receive any affirmation or peace from the Lord concerning the churches we visited. Because Acacia Ridge Baptist Church was close by Annerley, Cassandra and I visited one day. We were met by a small but loving and enthusiastic group of believers. Through attendance at Acacia Ridge Baptist over the weeks that followed, the Lord confirmed that this was where He was leading us.

We were blessed by the ministry of Pastor David and Lynda McMahon until David's retirement in September 2015. In November of the same year I was confirmed as the new

pastor. From the Sunday we first attended to the present, in Christ, we have come to love the congregation more and more each week. The Lord has blessed us through the congregation.



Paul and Cassandra Ryttersgaard

CASSANDRA RYTTERSGAARD

We have been blessed in many ways since we started attending Acacia Ridge Baptist Church, through the ministry of Pastor David and Lynda McMahon while they were at Acacia Ridge Baptist Church and the congregation generally. I thank the Lord, in particular, for the Ladies Bible Study group, which meets regularly at Chouchou's place in Sunnybank Hills. Chouchou has graciously hosted this now for at least a couple of years and it has been a real encouragement in the Lord, not only for myself, but others

as we have studied God's Word and prayed together, united and strengthened in the love of Christ.

One of the memorable times we have together is the Ladies Retreat in Brookfield which takes place annually in early December. We enjoy a blessed time of fellowship, food and fun and every year we have a guest speaker. Last year, we were grateful to God that we had Wendy Francis from the Australian Christian Lobby spend the weekend with us as our guest speaker and this year, Lynda McMahon will be joining us. God is faithful. We look forward to what the Lord is going to say to us through her. We usually have up to 20 ladies attending.

To God be the glory for His presence with us and His promises in His Word. "For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations." Psalm 100:5.

TESTIMONIES OF OUR MISSIONARIES

GARY WESTON

I became a Christian in my first year (1975) of uni (St Lucia, Qld). Before that I was convinced God did not exist. Even though I "knew" that God didn't exist, to make sure, I prayed: "God, if you are there, (I know You're not but), please show Yourself to me." That is a great (and dangerous!) prayer to pray! Soon after this I heard that God loved me so much that He sacrificed His Son Jesus, so that I could be free. I was nailed by the truth. What could I do? I thanked God. I told Him that I wasn't much, and certainly I was short-changing Him in this transaction, but I was all I had, and so, if He was willing to take me, I was giving myself to Him lock, stock and barrel in gratitude for what He

had done for me. He gave me a new courage, a new love, a whole new set of values, a new faith and I began following Jesus.

Through the Mundays and Steven Ball I began going to Acacia Ridge Baptist. Dr Munday really took me under his wing and disciplined me. We met many mornings for prayer. Martin and Val Clark, John and Robynne Lanham, Don and Grace McDonald, John and Janis Smart, Richard and Judy Lawler, Phil and Sue Gunton and the entire church family nurtured and taught and encouraged me and helped me to grow spiritually. They entrusted this very young Christian with cleaning, teaching Sunday School, leading the youth group and then occasionally preaching and in spite of woeful mistakes, I grew.



Gary & Ruth Weston

Although Acacia Ridge Baptist has never been a “mega” church, at one time it did have three pastors: (the Munday, the McDonalds and the Smarts)! As an extension course through the Baptist college, they taught a bunch of us a couple of subjects which gave me my first diploma and my first taste of the Baptist Theological College where Ruth and I would later study. After over 40 years we still have 2 of the basic text books with us here in Japan!

God used Acacia Ridge Baptist Church to form Ruth and I and now through us, He is using Acacia Ridge Baptist church to minister in Japan.

RUTH WESTON

I grew up in a non-Christian home but had a Christian friend at school who witnessed to me and invited me to Sunday School. At the age of ten I accepted Jesus as my Saviour. During my high school years, my family moved to Acacia Ridge. We lived in Emily St. so it was just a short walk down to the church. Dr. and Mrs. Munday were pastoring the church at that time.



As well as attending church on Sunday, I was involved in the youth group activities and remember especially the good teaching Dr. Munday gave us and the fun times we had on youth exchanges. There were some very keen Christians in the youth group and their commitment to Christ challenged me. As a result I rededicated my life to Jesus and was baptised.

Although I moved away from Acacia Ridge for a number of years, Gary and I were married at Acacia Ridge Baptist by Dr. Munday in December 1981. We also were commissioned at Acacia Ridge Baptist Church prior to going out to Japan with OMF as career missionaries in 1985.

During these 31 years on the field our church membership has continued to be at the Ridge and we have so appreciated the ongoing love and support of the members. We fondly remember how Mr. and Mrs. Buckman regularly posted us the Qld Baptist magazine which helped keep us in touch and gave us some spiritual encouragement. When we come back from the field for short periods, it's always a joy to come and worship with our brothers and sisters at the Ridge.

As we look back there have been quite a number of changes over the years. In our youth group days the congregation was fairly large and mostly comprised of white Australians. In more recent years the church has become very international. It sometimes seems to us to be like a little taste of heaven where those from every tribe, tongue and nation will be joining in worship.

TIM, MELANIE, JARRED and CLAYTON DOWNES

Congratulations Acacia Ridge on 50 years. A celebration well worth having.

Tim and I know how important a legacy is, stories passed down from one generation to the next about how God has worked. This type of history sets the standard for future generations and we are honored to play a small part of it. Acacia Ridge have been supporting us for the last 10 years of ministry here amidst the Yawo people of Malawi. Tim and I come from a heritage of followers of Jesus. Grandparents and parents who were committed to serving God wholeheartedly, not just on Sundays. Growing up on the mission field, God was preparing us for the work we are doing now. His plan is perfect and he always works together for the good of those who serve him according to his purpose. Well Done Acacia Ridge.



Tim, Melanie, Clayton (younger), Jarred (older)

CHURCH PEOPLE

EDDIE JOHNSON SENIOR, DEACON

My memories of Acacia Ridge are lovely, Rose and I and our two little ones Eddie and Lisa moved into Acacia Ridge early 1968 and transferred our membership from Brisbane City Tabernacle, Ian was a huge help to me as a young man (not much younger) we travelled about Acacia Ridge visiting all the Sunday school parents , witnessing to them. Phyllis and William were born at the ridge. I served as a Deacon and Sunday School Superintendent, and adult Sunday school teacher, then Youth Group leader, where the Go-kart fun started at the back of my workshop. The young people loved camping as we had a good boat and used it to effect. My four children love the Lord. I believe there were about eighteen teenagers in the group. The church had so many terrific family camps too. Dr Munday was a wonderful pastor, with a lovely family. He preached powerfully from the Old Testament, as well. May the Lords work continue at Acacia Ridge without ceasing drawing many to Him there. We moved to the Tweed Coast in 1986 so it was impossible to continue to worship at Acacia Ridge.

DAVID CAMPBELL, DEACON 2007-PRESENT, AND WIFE SHARON

We had been fellowshiping at another church but decided to join Acacia Ridge Baptist Church after David attended a service there when David's father Ian Campbell had been preaching as a visiting speaker in the absence of a pastor, after Phillip Gunton retired. While there, David observed a member's meeting after the service where the church was considering closing down as there were not enough people to continue.

Many in the church were elderly and physically limited in the extent to which they could contribute. We prayed about it long and hard and though it was a difficult decision to leave the morning fellowship where we were, we decided to make the change. There were no children or young families in the church and we hoped that by joining the church as a family with young children, with prayer, other young families might join the church. We started attending towards the end of 2006.



Owen, David, Sharon, Joshua, Jayden, and Rosa Campbell

God has taught us so much about serving and ministry (and continues to). He is faithful and has shown us how He can work in people's lives, drawing them into His Word and into a personal faith with him. HE IS AWESOME! We saw great answers to prayer such as praying for peers for our children. We have seen a fantastic Ladies Bible study begin amongst the women and now one for the men too.

As a small fellowship we have gone through some tough times together as well as ones of rejoicing. We have seen some young people come to love Christ and desire to meet together and study the Bible and pray for each other.

We came to the church a very short time after David Stevens became pastor. David Campbell became a deacon and treasurer during the pastorship of David Stevens. We have worked in the church alongside pastors and their wives David and Mary Stevens, Graham and Carolyn Edgar, David and Lynda McMahon, and most recently Paul and Cassandra Ryttersgaard.

During our time at Acacia Ridge Baptist we have had an opportunity to serve in many ministry and practical ways. We have enjoyed getting to know people in the church, to learn from the cultures of others and to see the Lord at work amongst us.

We have met and made many friends and prayed alongside them in the weekly prayer meetings, which started as a deacon's prayer meeting and became a prayer meeting for the congregation. These are times of great encouragement and fellowship.

Our younger two children have been born during our time at Acacia Ridge Baptist.

We thank the Lord that He is using us, weak vessels who love him! He is patient, He is faithful and He is Saviour! TO HIM BE THE GLORY!!

ERNEST BUCKMAN, 1926-2015, DEACON

Ernest Benjamin Thomas Buckman, known as Ernie, passed away on 19 July 2015. He was a wonderful servant of God and Acacia Ridge Baptist Church. Ernie never let life pass him by. To list all his achievements and the full repertoire of the activities he engaged in is not possible here.

However, it should be noted that as a member of the Australian Army in World War II, he was present at one of the nation's most significant historical events, the Japanese breakout at Cowra prisoner-of-war camp in New South Wales. Ernie was well known around Acacia Ridge, and after the construction of its new Post Office in 1968, he became a very recognisable face behind the counter. Of course, he also filled important ministry roles in the local Baptist Church, such as Treasurer.



Ernie & Elsie Buckman

ELSIE BUCKMAN

In late April 1967 the Buckman family – Ernie, Elsie, Gail, Ian and Raymond – moved to Acacia Ridge. Rev. Bob O'Neill, Gympie Baptist Church, contacted Rev. Stan Solomon of Acacia Ridge Baptist Church, about our coming and requiring accommodation for a couple of weeks, as we waited for our house to become available, and, our things to come from storage.

Ernie and the children commenced Sunday School the first weekend and we all attended the morning worship services. Ernie attended night services and the Wednesday night Prayer Meetings. Very soon Ernie was a deacon.

It was not long before both of us were Sunday School teachers. I had 10 girls in Grade 7. Then, I switched to a class, 17-18 boys in the Kindergarten. Three young married couples later joined the Church & Sunday School relieving the situation. I also became active in the Lady's Meetings and eventually was Secretary.

In 1970 Girl's Brigade commenced and I became Captain just before and during Dr. Munday's ministry. We hosted a group from Western Australia here for a Convention and Gail went to Perth with a Queensland group. Beth Ross, Janette Shearer and Gail earned their Training Braids, then, Gail and Janette went on to complete Queen's Awards. Their badges were presented by the Governor of Queensland. Both Janette and Gail went on to complete Lieutenant's Training.

In 1981 due to a lack of members, the 55th Girl's Brigade Company, then, the 60th Company at Church of Christ

Acacia Ridge, applied to our Church for membership with alternate parades in the Baptist Church on a Sunday night. Elsie Buckman.

GAIL NAGLE (nee BUCKMAN)

I started attending Acacia Ridge Baptist Church from 8 years of age when my family moved to Alderwood Street. My parents were very involved in the church, so I weekly also. I walked to church for many years.

I came to know Jesus as my own personal saviour at 12 years old during/after a mission held at the church (Jim Kitson, Speaker). I was baptised and became a church member and Sunday school teacher (taught David Campbell as a 7/8 year old) as co-teacher with Barbara McNab. I was a teacher in/attended Girl's Brigade and Youth Group. I went nursing as a 17 year old, but attended church around weekend shifts. I met my husband at church – Wayne Nagle, friend of O. Damro.

I loved attending the Baptist Youth Fellowship functions with young peoples' group in the late 1970's. I loved Sunday school teaching with Barbara. I loved Girl's Brigade and opportunities for personal and spiritual development, and then later teaching others and giving them the same opportunities. I got married at the church on 15 November 1980 and had great photos under the tree out the front, Dr. Jack Munday, Minister.

JAYANNE NAGLE

God has been in my life for my whole life, although through my teen years I had pushed him to the side. I attended Girl's Brigade for 10 years and Bayside Baptist every Sunday from when I was born and came to know just how much God is always there even when you think he is not.

The foundations for love 'my love' were built back then and I blamed him for some events in my life knowing how God only gives you what you can handle to mould you to His plan.

I started attending Acacia Ridge Baptist Church in 2014-2015 taking my beautiful Nana and Pa on and off occasionally (I know I can't make it every Sunday. I would love to) my whole life, too. God has kept my desire to do good things strong and I talk with him more often. Also, having such a beautiful family here helps to set in stone just how amazing and wonderful He is. I remember when my Pa [Ernest (Ernie) Benjamin Thomas Buckman, 1926-2015] was the church treasurer and he was full of life. I remember stories of my Nana, Mother and Aunt, also attending Girl's Brigade.

NIELSEN AND NATHALIA ABREU



We are a young couple from Venezuela. We had lived our entire life in our country, Venezuela. In January 2010, we wanted to move to a new and different country and look for new opportunities which unfortunately our country was not able to offer.

In our search, we were looking into the United States as an opportunity, but we were not really sure about that idea. We have been to the United States but we didn't see ourselves living there for some reason.

Another option was Canada, we really liked the idea, but we thought about the weather and we thought that we could not really be strong enough to stand the weather. And suddenly, one of my friends, who had already left the country, was living in Australia by that time, and he contacted us to ask something and he ended up recommending us to go to Australia because it is an amazing country for living. But we were thinking, it is too far away, but my friend started calling us more often and he was telling us more and more beautiful things about this great country called Australia. Until one day, my husband and I decided, well if there is a country which has similar weather like our country maybe we could consider the idea to move to Australia. And then, we saw Brisbane, and we were just so fascinated about the city only by looking at the photos on the Internet. It is important to highlight that before we moved we were not considering God at all in our plans.

In November 2010, we arrived to Australia with are our suitcases full of dreams and emotions. We were studying English during that time and we met another Venezuelan who was studying English in the same English School as us.

One day, I spoke to my husband that I feel empty here. I felt like "something" was missing in my life but of course it is not easy to identify what is that "something" because it could be you miss your family, friends, country, friends and so on. However, I couldn't identify what that "something" was. So I started my dancing classes which I love and I also enrolled in different activities. However, nothing changed my feeling and I was still looking for that "something". Until, one day, our Venezuelan friend invited us to a Baptist Church where we met this couple, Cassandra and her husband Paul. We started coming to the church more and more often, we also started our bible studies there. And it was there where I started feeling different where I realized all the things that Jesus had done for us and how wonderful is His love. After all these years I just missed that. But for God, it is never too late to know him and come to him. I said that our journey had started as I came to understand that it was not really my plan it was God's plan to bring us here. He put us out of our comfort zone to know Him better and grow in faith. I started to understand more about God and started recognizing Him as my Father and Saviour. I have seen how God has been working upon us through challenging times that we have been going through. Now I can see his mercy. And see that God never leaves us or forsake us. I trust His promises even though there are times when my faith has been weak. He just turns things around to show me that what He has promised is real and he has been teaching me that it is not about my plan, it is all about His plan. As a good Venezuelan, I used to have a plan A,B,C through to Z. But now that my Lord is taking control of us, I pray first and I ask him for his wisdom first to help me to understand things that are not easy to understand sometimes. Now, I can see how wonderful God is and how much He loves me. And I am not perfect. But there is one thing that I am sure about and it is I don't see

myself living a life without God anymore. And I want to encourage my son to adore him with all his soul and my husband.

Now, we have our permanent residency, my permanent job, my Mum from Venezuela is here with us and I have wonderful Christian people who have been praying for me and supporting us during this time here in Australia. Especially to Cassandra and Paul who have been like our family and always praying for us. I just want to say with God all things are possible. Matthews 19:26

CHOUCHOU

My name is Chouchou. I want to thank God for what He did for me in the time I have been in Australia, 5 and a half years. I had a lot of medical issues, after more than seven major operations along with the prayers from my church community here at Acacia Ridge Baptist Church, God has healed me. The doctor did not know what was going on with my body, after almost dying from my last operation, thanks to God for the community of believers who loved and prayed for me, I am miraculously healed. After all of these plus other issues in my life, I discovered God brought me to

Acacia Ridge Baptist Church, for a reason, being surrounded by people who have loving and caring hearts. After losing all I loved and wanted I found Jesus whom I love and need in my life. I am blessed to be a part of a small but loving and caring Acacia Ridge Baptist Church community of believers. Psalm 34:18.

FATUMA

God has done so much in my life coming to Acacia Ridge Baptist Church has greatly helped me to grow in my faith as a Christian. The most important thing about being part of this church is that I have found people who have a great love for God and this is shown in the way we love and care for one another. I can't really remember the month I started attending this church, but it's sometime in 2012. I have learned so much about God's love for me – for this I thank every church member for being so loving, kind and caring.



DEL HAMAEEKERS

I came to Acacia Ridge Baptist Church about November 1973, lost spiritually and broken emotionally. I repented of my sins and gave my life to my beautiful Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour. I exchanged my life for his. Though it cost family and friends it is so worth it.

Six or seven years later I left and went on an interesting journey through different churches. I have seen amazing things that the Lord can do. I have also seen things that people get caught up in which they believe are from God. But it is not scriptural and is produced by the one who comes as an angel of light to deceive if he can even deceive the very elect of God.



After a lot of years I really did not want to go to church. I kept a relationship with the Lord through prayer and reading, and good programmes on God T.V. However, I have a friend who always encouraged me to get back to church. It took a while but around this time last year I came back and it has been a joy. I can thank the Lord that he has always kept me in the palm of his hand. I would much rather be in a church small in number as it may be that preaches

Christ and him crucified than to be in a place with a thousand people who follow false doctrine and no longer preach the real way of salvation through the blood. It is good to be home.

SVENNE

I was born in Munich/West Germany my parents both had a traumatic childhood/teenage years during World War II, a baggage which would have affected their ability to provide a happy and stable home. But they tried very hard.

I was a very depressed child. I had trouble in school and could never live up to both my parents' hopes and expectations academically, as hard as I tried. Regardless the care and the privileges of pets and friends to play with, etc., all those years at home seemed very dark and heavy, my only hope was to be an adult one day and move out. However this heaviness made me ask questions about the meaning of life and I was seeking God.

My parents were non-believers, but I heard Bible stories in RE, which was compulsory. Later I attended the confirmation classes (which I greatly enjoyed) and was confirmed in the Lutheran Church. I was allowed to sing in a church choir performing the Messiah, Christmas Oratorio, etc., with yearly concerts in France. I was spiritually very hungry but was given more and more philosophical books and New Age literature to read, also books on the stars influencing a person's life. I had no discernment that was not the truth, and that certain teachings were contradictory to the Christian faith, but I thought highly of Jesus. However he was history and I could not see how I could connect with him. But I knew God existed as He answered a prayer of despair one time. On my search for God I later studied material

from the Jehovah's Witnesses and read all sorts of different religious material, but nothing 'clicked' with me.

I was in search for love and purpose, wanted to talk and be understood so I easily gave myself to diverse boyfriends. The effect was being emotionally very hurt when a relationship broke and in the end not really having any sense of who I was.

There were increasingly worse clashes at home and I left before I was 18. Seeking community I lived in a commune with 5 students, hoping this could become a happy family experience, but what a disappointment it ended up being! Later I understood that it was God's protection that I was never really accepted into the group as the students were involved in various harmful things.

With no job, hardly any money and no direction or hope I started to think life was very unfair and with some input of communist propaganda, I became angry at the rich and more and more rebelled against 'the system', and even started to steal from big shopping chains with no conviction that I was doing something wrong. When converted I did seek to make restitution with a specific shop and was forgiven.

But I had a wonderful Music teacher who knew me for some years, he must have had an inkling of my lost state and he organised for me to teach some of his recorder and flute students. This enabled me to move into a lovely little attic unit on my own, but I felt I was leading a 'double life'. I was looked up to by my students and respected by the parents, but even so I probably didn't steal anymore, but I still carried this impurity of character around with me.

I was only a couple of months living on my own, when I met my future husband who 'swept me away' on a motor-bike and started to organise my free time. I saw in Him a man who would protect me and provide for me, he was much older, divorced, a workaholic and financially secure – and he had an interest in me! I wasn't in love but had no plan for my life so it was easy for him to convince me after just half year going out together to join him in immigrating to Australia. I was eager to leave Germany and was looking for a new start. It ended up being a huge disappointment.

I was stuck on a property in Coffs Harbour and overlooked by the man I thought would look after me. I didn't know anyone else but my partner and his also much older friends, all divorced and remarried businessmen. There was nowhere else to go for diversion, e.g. cinema or dancing and I wasn't able to drive. The passage Hosea 2:14 describes exactly what happened to me. The LORD took me to what felt like a desert to speak friendly to me.

I mentioned I had an answer to a prayer years before (also it seemed a very egotistic prayer), so in despair I cried out to God that he would help me and direct my life from now on. He was the only one who could help me – but I had not much hope that an unimportant, sinful individual would matter to God Almighty.

An amazing chain of events had prevented me from committing suicide and have new hope. As a quick answer to my prayer an older Swiss Missionary couple visited. It was lovely to speak my language with someone else but their love and respect for each other, the joy in their heart was a witness to me of God. From then onwards the veil was

lifted from my eyes and I understood and believed the Word.

God knows us best and in His wisdom He allowed it to happen, that after just a couple of months of rich teaching and fellowship, we moved to Brisbane. On one of the Missionaries' visits, I was asked to read the Ten Commandments and the Holy Spirit gave me a great depth of understanding of my sinfulness. After many tears and prayer, I received assurance that my sins are forgiven by reading Romans 5:1+2. I completely turned away from my old ways, burned some occult literature, changed my cloth and style as my heart desired the good and shunned away from the worldly things but this had a very bad effect on the relationship with my partner.



I needed to make a decision, as my extended holiday visa expired. Strangely enough my husband did not want me to go back to Germany. I wanted to do God's will from now on. I laid my desire to be loved and happy on the altar, prayed and looked for answers in the Word. I felt the LORD

was directing me to get married, but shortly after our wedding I was forbidden to participate in any church meetings or see any Christians. But all things work together for good for God knows us best and has the purpose to prosper us spiritually. I think I would never have experienced Jesus and the Holy Spirit's leading as much, if I would not have had the privilege of going to church. I would not have loved all the friendly people, the family bonds, the singing, etc., and would not have strained for a relationship with Jesus.

The Lord has given me a son. I was overjoyed but also very exhausted as he was very clingy and I didn't have any helpers to help me. I did obey my husband's demand not to have Christian fellowship for a long time, however, it became a very nasty relationship and I could not manage anymore. I told my husband I would meet the missionaries secretly, and those secret short meetings, maybe every 2 months, were amazing God moments. I was in great fear even about arranging them, but every time I was so richly rewarded for being courageous. I believe the intercession of many brothers and sisters I didn't even know kept me walking in faith.

There were many trials, the way I was belittled in front of his friends, and especially the constant remarks about being brain washed, etc. However, nobody could take my experience of being forgiven my sins and having received a purification of my body. My heart desires have changed so much and also I did not always interpret the Word correctly, it was food for my soul and I then moulded my life. In very difficult times I experienced the Holy Spirit putting a Bible verse in my mind, or a song that helped me to know Jesus is there and helped me to go on in faith.

I was guarded by my husband and also devoted myself to be a submissive loving wife and good Mum. I also worked hard in the home and garden and was earning food and spending money. My Bible readings and reading to my son had to be secret – which was difficult as my husband worked from home. There was hardly any ‘me’ time and I couldn’t develop my own friendships but my own friendships but my suffering and obedience to God was to eventually be rewarded in my husband receiving a changed heart – so I thought.

It has been a big blow to my faith that the marriage didn’t last but ended after 11 years. I was thrown out of home and the fourth time this happened the LORD showed me in the passage 1 Corinthians 7:15 that I am free of the marriage covenant, and in verses 21-23 that I should not neglect the opportunity to be free to be a slave of Christ.

At 34 and my son in Grade 4, I stood alone without home or any belongings for a while but the LORD provided faithfully. Christians came alongside me and I was soon embedded in a church family. When my son finished Grade 8, the LORD led me to home-school him with the help of the other home-schooling families in the area. We lived on the campus of a theological college which gave him exposure to intact families. There were so many things where I saw God’s blessing hand on us, but it was still hard to find another purpose in life then being a wife, or later even give up the mothering role. However struggling with my teenage son (reaping what I sowed to my own parents) I wasn’t successful in those callings, a great pain and shame to me.

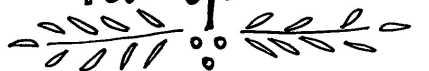
I wasn’t rewarded for my efforts in those areas, however my later work in Aged Care was tremendously satisfying, as

for the first time I felt appreciated for me pouring myself in physically, emotionally and sometimes also spiritually, supporting and encouraging others. I was enriched by many life stories and experiences and much enjoyed my work. After sometime of living on my own, later being a live in carer for a lady with a disability, the LORD blessed me with the opportunity to build a Christian home with Catherine, with the purpose of a place to share Christ's love.

Living with Cathy was the start of the happiest chapter in my life. However this is not due to a marvellous friendship. In fact, we were not naturally compatible with each other, had nothing in common except our faith in Christ, and would probably never have pursued contact apart from church meetings. But He had put us together and we both wanted to serve the LORD. Living together showed up all my shortcomings and I was often tired of dying to self or what I felt was living in her shadow. But we wrestled on spiritually, individually and together, and the LORD brought many single ladies, Korean, Chinese Taiwanese and African into our life to study the Word and share our lives.

Catherine and I practise sharing our belongings as the early church did and we also are enriched by our different gifts. The LORD has been pleased to enlarge our home and we are waiting on Him with whom we will share the lovely property Mahanaim, and most important, the life in Christ.

Great is thy
Faithfulness!



CATHERINE TONKIN

I was born in Toowoomba and am thankful for the home and family in which I grew up. During my childhood and teenage years, I believed in God and regularly attended church. As I look back now though, it was undertaken more as a matter of course, rather than as a result of a proper acknowledgement and understanding of Jesus and the meaning of a personal relationship with Him. I did, however, have a clear understanding of my own personal sin, and often felt guilty as a result of my obvious childhood selfishness, looking forward to the weekly times of communion as a way of having another fresh start. Yet, failing again within the hour of leaving the church gathering – usually through fights with my sisters!

When I moved to Brisbane to attend university, I did not have any real church involvement. A few years later, working as a solicitor in a top tier Brisbane law firm, I had seemingly made it in society. However I often found myself wondering if the total purpose of my existence was only measured in 'billable time'. I became extremely stressed and had a minor breakdown. This was quite a crisis experience and very embarrassing to me at the time but to this day I thank the Lord for the extreme circumstances because He used them to 'get my attention' and to provide the final trigger to start the phase in my life of really seeking out Jesus.

I did what I previously thought would have been unthinkable and left the law firm. After some time in Germany looking after children, I moved to London where the Lord brought me into the midst of a local group of believers. While this group included doctors and lawyers, I was struck by how they lived their lives in a way that seeking Jesus

came before their jobs and ambitions. This observation had a big impact on me. I joined them for their church weekend away down in Kent and through the preaching of the Word I finally surrendered my life fully to Jesus.



Until this point, it was like I was living my life with one foot on the dock and one on a boat that was about to depart. It was finally the time to make a decision and praise the Lord he helped me to make the right decision. Interestingly, I related to C.S. Lewis' reflection about his own conversion when he expressed something like that he had become the most reluctant convert in England. For me, this was not one big emotional joyous experience – rather it was finally a personal agreement that everything that was written about Jesus in The Bible was true. Who then was I to demand that I could live my life how I wanted to?

This year or so with these believers in Christ was a very precious time of growing in my knowledge of the Word and through that in my relationship with Jesus. It was a very ex-

citing time and indeed the emotion of joy quickly followed the initial mere act of obedient surrender. This was a real turning point in my life.

Today, I'm very thankful for my job which gives me the flexibility to serve God as He leads. I am a grateful member of the family of believers at Acacia Ridge Baptist Church and I am so blessed by the faithful witness of so many in our midst who encourage me with their testimony of faith in the face of hardships both in their past and today.

Finally I praise my Saviour for the life He has given me and the opportunity to serve Him along with my dear sister in Christ and, prayerfully, with many others in the future, in our new surroundings outside of Boonah.

CATHERINE AND SVENNE - MAHANAIM

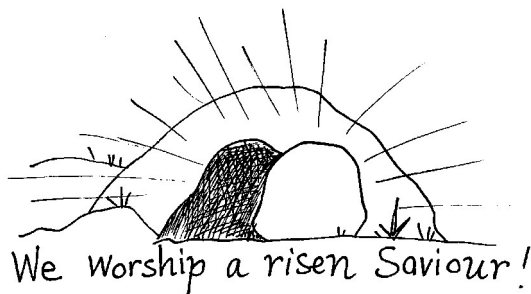
When the LORD gave us the vision for leaving Sunnybank we felt we needed to stretch our "tent pegs" to have a place where it would be possible to have guests and people who need a little emotional or physical respite from serving the LORD.

We believed we could exercise sharing what we have, and serving the LORD in serving others. We have been serving the LORD together and in individual ministries while sharing a home for more than a decade. We have been challenged to live out what we have seen in the book of Acts as owning things 'in common' for the common good. We don't think any more, for example, about whose car one drives and in relation to quite a number of our possessions we no longer make distinctions as to who officially 'owns' what.

As the LORD has continued to chip away our desires and rescue us from selfishness, it seems others are blessed by the bond we enjoy in the Holy Spirit. We realize that we have different gifting and working together bringing it all in to one home, enables us to do things that otherwise a single person would not be able to accomplish. But it came to a point in our journey where we saw others should now also be included.

During 2014/2015 we saw an increasing need for accommodation and work amongst our church family and friends. Rent prices seemed to skyrocket. While we had a free bedroom, we found that living in a more upmarket suburb with a relatively small backyard and limited parking space meant that we were somewhat limited in how we could share our home.

We individually asked the LORD afresh for direction as we both felt not quite in the right place and we hadn't had a shared ministry for a while. It became clear that Cathy was free to sell the house and move it – but to where ??? Svenne saw that the particular employment and living in the city was not the LORD's plan for her.



It was amazing how the LORD answered our prayer to show us where he wanted us - not by a special revelation or an audible voice but by a strong conviction and a

peace in each of us. After much prayer we had clarification that we should go for an off- grid situation (without power and water supply). Also the area needed to be somewhere between Ipswich, Toowoomba and not too far from Acacia Ridge. We both loved Boonah already but we were open to other options too – for example – Marburg or Esk.

For about a month we just looked at properties on the internet and prayed and through this, the Boonah area was confirmed. After this we had only 1 outing with the real estate agent. The second property he showed us was it. When we drove into the driveway an assurance and peace came over both of us so we didn't need any further investigation. Up until today we have not seen any other place we feel would have been a remotely equal option. We called the property Mahanaim after the place where Jacob saw the host of angels camping around his company. We felt also from the first day that the LORD was here and would be our protection.

As we committed every new step to Him regarding the move of the house, the financial outlays, the building of the extension and living space under the house and who to choose to accomplish each task etc., God has really put everything together.

We are so grateful for our church, as we had sooo much help and lots of fun packing up and even, for example, moving our water tank from Sunnybank. Our former Pastor David and our current Pastor Paul both also have been mightily involved in the hard work and shown that they are men of action! But other brothers and also sisters have laboured here for days as well, many pray for us and that has been a great help and comfort. We hope that every-

one at Acacia Ridge Baptist Church will be able to be blessed here, that the youth group will have camps here, that the ladies would have retreats, and that there would be space for gardening or just relaxation for everybody. For us it has been a great journey of learning patience, of living step by step with no clear long term vision. We have both grown stronger spiritually and in unity as there has been also pain of our own ideas coming to nothing, especially regarding brothers joining us here to help us. However we have experienced the LORD as our protector and provider in incredible ways.



Unexpectedly, the LORD did bring a young man, a former friend of Svenne's son with skills, equipment and 2 dogs. They were actually a big challenge but the LORD took care of this as well. He has accomplished many handy man tasks for us. Needing to get back on his feet in life, he has shown the desire to follow Christ and just recently gave his life to the LORD. What a joy for us!

The LORD's timing in everything often amazed us. Prior to leaving Sunnybank, we had the opportunity to mind our neighbour's house exactly when we needed it. (The request from our neighbour to look after the house was

made many months before – definitely before we even imagined our move). This enabled us to move whatever we needed for living and what needed to be out of the house for the transport to its new homeland. The house was moved in 2 parts with 2 trucks on the same night. The house moved September 15th, 2015, the same day as the Sunnybank property sale settled.

We moved into the house now at Mahanaim when Svenne's employment was finished, but at first we had to climb in via ladder, we had no running water, no power and no toilet and parts of the interior still in disrepair. It was glamour camping for a while, especially as we had to carry the water in and out via ladder. Good training to make us learn to be very frugal with water, since we are completely dependent on rain water.

It has also been a great change of lifestyle, with Cathy having to drive a long way to work and sleeping over at her sisters in Brisbane one night, and for Svenne being alone on the property with a lot of physical work to be done. However we have not yet ceased to praise the LORD for bringing us to this most beautiful place nestled between the hills. Every morning we marvel about the beauty of the new day and every evening we are still enjoying the colourful display of the sundown and the countless stars. We have to depend on the LORD in many ways and He has never let us down. It seems the place needs to be functional very soon as everything has and is happening very quickly and we think that by winter downstairs will be ready.

PRAISE to the Maker, the LORD God our loving Father and Jesus through whom we inherited the son-ship and God's favour.

HARRIS JACKSON

God took me from war-torn Liberia to a refugee camp in Ghana and God made a way for me out of nowhere. When I was living in the refugee camp in Liberia I went through many trials, one of the greatest being when my ten year old son died of starvation in my arms. But God showed His love and faithfulness to me. He saved me from starvation and in doing so the Lord saved my life because He wanted me to serve Him until the day I die.



Prior to this, in 1970, the President of Liberia sponsored my trip to Paris so I could have surgery on my leg as I had had polio since I was a boy. My operation was successful, but I had to stay in hospital for many months and in that time I learnt to speak French. After this, I returned home where I spent the next 15 years in refugee camps, in Liberia, Ivory Coast and Ghana in western Africa before I was informed by a United Nations representative that the war in Liberia had ended, and as a result, I was offered free repatriation

back to Liberia. I was reluctant to return to my home country, as I was concerned that I might not survive another war, so I declined the offer. Sometime after this, I was granted a UN humanitarian visa for Australia.

Arriving in Brisbane, I spent three months here before I began looking for a church. One day as I was walking home from Woolworths on Beaudesert Road with my grandson, a man stopped at Mortimer Road and offered us a lift to Wargrave Street in Acacia Ridge where I lived. I warned my grandson not to get into the car, but I did accept a lift in the end. The driver was Adrian Gunton, the son of the pastor of Acacia Ridge Baptist Church. I asked Adrian if he knew of a church that I could attend as I had been attending a meeting of the Seventh Day Adventists in Springwood, however, I was hoping to attend an evangelical church. So Adrian took me to Acacia Ridge Baptist for the first time in 2006. I have been attending there ever since and I am grateful to God for making a way for me and my family and caring for me through the love and support and fellowship I has received from my brothers and sisters in Christ at Acacia Ridge Baptist and for being a part of the family of God. I especially recall when I was homeless that Graham Edgar, the pastor at the time, and some of the others in the congregation, helped me to find a place to live in Kangaroo Point, where I live today.

I would like to encourage others to come to church and learn about God. He is real and is willing to take anyone in. I have a personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and a grateful heart for all the ways that the Lord has shown His faithfulness, goodness and love to me over many years. To God be the glory.

JOHN

My Grandmother was a prolific reader of the Bible. My father was a senior military officer. When I was young, my parents also instilled in me a Christian morality and the value of learning. At school, Roman Catholic Nuns reinforced this Christian faith and a solid education. Decades later, after both my parents had passed away, I found my Mother's Bible, with notes written in the back, of the exact time and date she had finished reading all of it. This is an ambition I hope one day to acquire the discipline to replicate.

I can tentatively recall in the 1970s building Housing Commission homes somewhere around Acacia Ridge. Later, I worked through long, long, 12 hour night shifts in a factory near Archerfield Airport. I never ever thought then that I would one day be happily living in Acacia Ridge and be involved with its local Baptist Church. During part of my earlier working years, which included toiling away around this suburb, I also attended a selection of churches as a committed Christian, and even travelled to Europe with a Pastor who was going to the Billy Graham Crusade. However, I eventually ceased my presence at church for one reason or another. I then spent considerable time undertaking academic research in the United States, and mixed in the type of often secular philosophical circles where 'there is no truth, just perception', and Christians or Christian Missionaries are seen as rudely obstructing the noble interaction of anthropologists and Indian tribes.

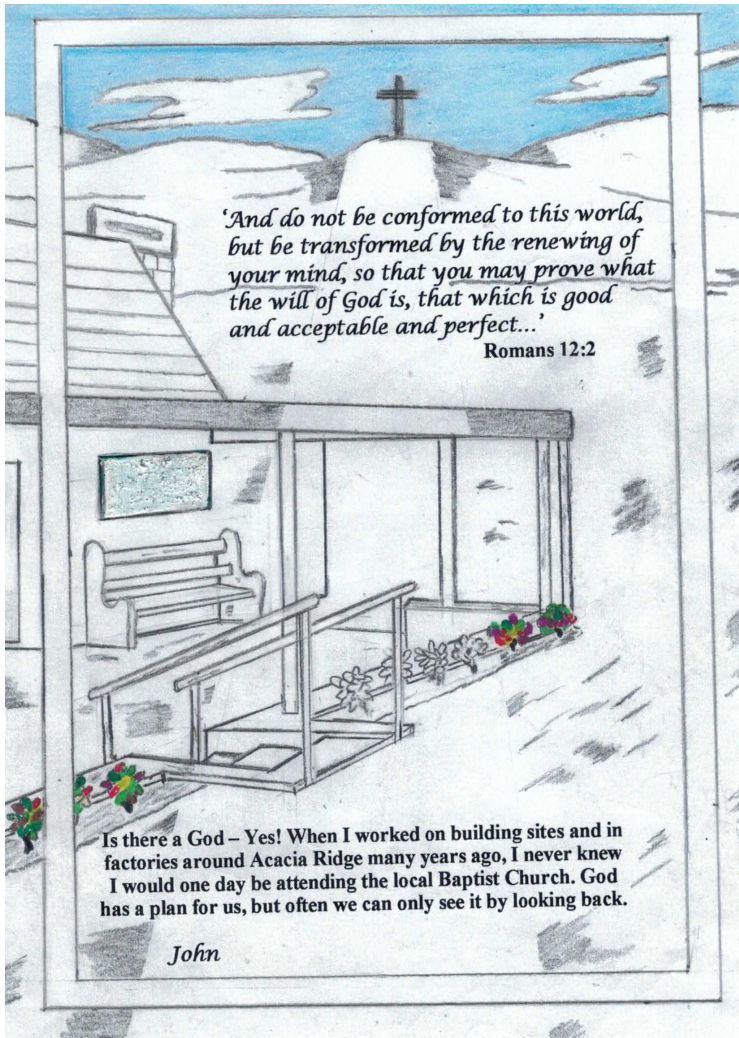
But I have never stopped maintaining contact with certain Christian individuals who had been a great positive influence on me in the past. When I embarked on a teaching career, it was one of them who would take me up to his school and allow me to have extra training in front of a

class. When I moved overseas to teach, it was one of them who made sure my belongings were securely stored. To me, this is the type of connection consistent with Christ's teaching. We don't exploit or tear down our fellow believers, but look after and support each other. That's not to say I do this perfectly.

I always knew that one day I would resume my involvement at church again. It was a type of forerunning grace, that no matter what my situation, I wanted more than the mundane conformity to worldly expectations. I was living down in western New South Wales, and I would sometimes observe Martin Clark in the local library teaching students from the Christian School. His wife Val and I spent several Friday mornings at her poetry sessions, sometimes discussing more theological matters rather than poetry. She even got me involved in the Short and Sweet Ten Minute Play series. It was only recently that I discovered Martin and Val had spent time at Acacia Ridge Baptist Church in the late 1970s, when he was the Youth Pastor, and they lived two doors down from the church in what was then the manse at 84 Chardean Street. God works in.....well everyone knows the rest!

Around November 2014, I strolled into Acacia Ridge Baptist Church thinking that I might be able to help out with the after school Homework Group. Pastor David McMahon, who tended to virtually patrol the car park seeking to drag unsuspecting candidates into his sphere of Christian influence, was out there to greet me. I asked him who was in charge. He replied something like, "I am, well God is, but I am". That was my first contact with this church. For one thing, the very inclusive, multicultural characteristic of the church body, and the other African and Tongan congregations who also worship there, strongly appealed to me. I

have found true spiritual fellowship there in abundance, and also through an occasional diversion to the countryside Christian homestead known as Mahanaim. It's a real honour to have been out there when it was no more than marked out black soil, and to watch as the strong faith and vision of two Christian women from Acacia Ridge Baptist gradually brought this idea to fruition.



*'And do not be conformed to this world,
but be transformed by the renewing of
your mind, so that you may prove what
the will of God is, that which is good
and acceptable and perfect...'*

Romans 12:2

**Is there a God – Yes! When I worked on building sites and in
factories around Acacia Ridge many years ago, I never knew
I would one day be attending the local Baptist Church. God
has a plan for us, but often we can only see it by looking back.**

John

DEBBIE MILLER

Going to Acacia Ridge Church has changed my live a lot. People go through hardship in life and most of the time we don't know how to deal with hardships. I am one of those people who don't know how to deal with hardships. But even since I started going to Acacia Ridge Baptist Church and listening in on God's message, I have been able to come to terms with the difficulties and hardships that have been going on in my life.



The Lord's message has helped me to believe in him more, it has helped me to understand that hardships are not permanent and that we love all of his creation and he wants the best for us.

AGNES MORSERAY

Before I got to know the Lord, my life was in a huge mess. I used to be deeply into the world. I would walk, talk and act like a worldly person, because of that I had no peace or love within myself or anyone in my life. My family and I weren't on good terms, friends kept on disappointing me, and everything was just meaningless to me. I used to go to church, but it wasn't my passion, it was like I was being forced to attend church. I felt that it was just the right thing to do, everyone has to attend church! I used to go to church and come out without remembering anything that the pastor had just preached. Nothing changed about me, in fact things were getting way out of hand with my life. At times I felt like killing myself due to the lack of peace I had within myself, I felt like why am I in this crazy upside-down world; I was like a lost soul heading for destruction.

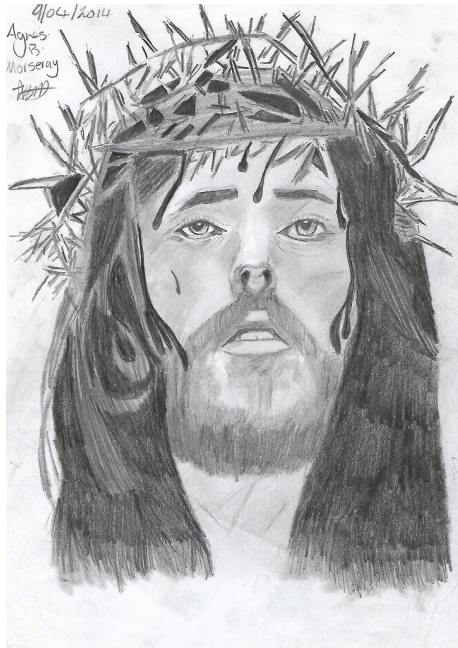
The worst thing happened when circumstances in my life prevented me from attending my old church. I was really disappointed because at the time because I was trying to find myself. I wasn't happy at all. I ended up not going to church for 7 months, but something strange happened during those 7 months, I started to get close with God. I started to read my Bible, watch some preaching online, preach on my Facebook page and just had a life that was hungry for the word of God. Looking back I guess everything happened for a reason. I give thanks to Jesus for stepping into my messy life and taking absolute control.

How I came to attend Acacia Ridge Baptist Church is through Pastor David McMahan. It started like this I was praying to God to lead me to the right church because I had stopped going to church for 7 months, and I was hun-

gry for the word of God. So one evening I was walking to the bus stop from school, when I met Pastor David who asked me if I knew Finda. She was my friend who was attending Acacia Ridge Baptist Church. I said yes and then he started to talk to me about the church and about one event that was coming up which was the combined Christmas service and invited me to attend. I prayed about it and talked with Finda to find out ways on how I could go and see how the church was. I felt peace within myself about attending Acacia Ridge Baptist and so did my Dad. I attended the Christmas service there and loved it, and from then on I started to attend the church. I just give God the glory that he gave me the privilege to be part of Acacia Ridge Baptist.



Since I started attending Acacia Ridge Baptist Church my life changed for the best because my faith in Christ has grown. I have found that the peace and love that I had been looking for in the world was found in Christ. With Christ my relationship with my family got better, I have been laughing and smiling with my family, I started praying and doing things with my family; I just give God the glory that he brought peace, love and joy into my family. My sister and I started a Bible study club in my school through Pastor David who helped me by providing the bibles and also to the church for praying for the group which brought light to those who are in the darkness. My little sister's relationship with the Lord has also grown. I give God the glory for that."



Pencil sketch of Jesus by Agnes Morseray

OUR FRIENDS FROM OTHER FELLOWSHIPS USING OUR BUILDING

PASTOR ALFRED FINAU, FREE CONSTITUTIONAL CHURCH OF TONGA

To the Acacia Ridge Baptist Church,
On behalf of the Tongan congregation, I would like to extend our love and warm wishes to the Acacia Ridge Baptist Church on the celebration of its 50th anniversary. I would also like to extend our gratitude and many thanks for giving the Tongan congregation a house to praise His almighty name. This church has been our home and our foundation for 17 years now. We thank you for the love and hospitality you have shown us over the years. 1 Corinthians 3:9 says – “For we are partners working together for God, and you are God's field”.



From my congregation to yours, God bless and 'Otua 'Ofa
Atu.

Before the Acacia Ridge Baptist Church, my family was heavily involved and committed to our faith which meant I was also involved.

Although I was physically present at church and events and programs, spiritually I was disconnected from God and my relationship with Him wasn't very strong. The Acacia Ridge Baptist Church started my journey with Christ and was also where I became a pastor. Currently, I am the assisting Pastor to Reverend Tevita Sikalu, who is the Tongan congregations' state minister.

The Tongan congregations started attending the church in 1999.

Personally the Acacia Ridge Baptist Church is significant for me because it was in this house of God where I started my first ministry. Ever since I started attending the church, my life has had a sense of fulfilment and meaning sharing his word. My memories are of the combined Easter and Christmas services. It's really great watching the different congregations come together.

REVEREND SIALE TUPOU, FREE CONSTITUTIONAL CHURCH OF TONGA

I was a pastor for many years in Tonga. Tongan life is heavily Christian influenced so God was at work everyday of my life and it was the cultural norm. I began attending in 1999 along with my Tongan congregation. The Acacia Ridge Baptist Church has been significant in my relationship with God because it showed me that it is possible to practice my Christianity in a Western country. It has been mine and my family's home for the last 17 years. My memories are of the combined Christmas services and the Baptism of my grandchildren happened in the church.

PASTOR JEAN BUKASA, THE LITTLE FLOCK WORSHIP CENTRE

God was good to me and my family. He protected us in a civil war in my country. God continued to show us his mercy in Zambia, our country of refuge. God continues to bless us here in Australia. I started attending services at Acacia Ridge Baptist Church in 2012. The power of God was really manifest in praise and worship in preaching and in prayer. The best moments which I keep in my memory are days of combined service with other congregations.

BLAISE ITABELO, WORSHIP TEAM MEMBER, THE LITTLE FLOCK WORSHIP CENTRE

Congratulations to Acacia Ridge Baptist Church on its 50 year anniversary in 2016. For some time, I have regularly attended the Little Flock Worship Centre which meets every Sunday at the Baptist Church. As part of the Little Flock congregation, I am one of the musicians who lead the service and worship.

Along with my family, I fled from the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1996, and we then spent the next 16 years of our lives in refugee camps in Tanzania. I received my primary and secondary education from the United Nations while in a refugee camp waiting for resettlement to a new and safe country. In the UN camp, I learned French, but to ensure I would be the best I could possibly be wherever we were resettled, I taught myself English. I was then employed at the same school I attended and taught Math, Physics, Biology and Chemistry and English. I then taught English in the camp to provide opportunities for the other refugees when the UN resettled them. Refugees were not allowed to earn an income in the camps. So I was 'rewarded' for this work with US\$10 per month. However, I

didn't do it for the money, but because I believe in giving service to those you can help and to your community.

Subsequently, I received a UNHCR university scholarship to study at The Institute of Social Work in Dar-Es Salaam, the capital of Tanzania. Out of arguably thousands of applicants, I was one of only five individuals to receive this scholarship. It was very possibly a life-changing event for me. Over the next four years I completed my Bachelor of Industrial Relations. During this time, I met my wife, Furaha. She was an Australian citizen of Congolese heritage. For me, it was love at first sight.

After I graduated in 2011, I moved to Australia to be with her and we settled in Marsden, but have recently had a house built and have moved to Yarrabilba. We are now part of the best city in Australia, where we raise our children, Eli (7), Kenas (2) and Charlotte and Harriette (3 months). I want to make sure that our community is the best it can be for all of its residents.

When we settled in Logan, Furaha was working for Access Community Services Ltd. I became a Bilingual Bicultural Assistant (BBA) and then an actual caseworker to help our newest arrivals settle in and become fully integrated members of our Logan community. I love serving our community. This is why I also volunteer as a mentor with the Access Youth Program and the Access Men's Shed.

I am also a proud Logan small business owner. I believe that anyone who comes to this great city, who works hard and does the right thing, can make their dreams come true. I was also awarded the 2014 Migration Institute of Australia 'Student of the Year Award', and am currently studying for my post-doctoral qualifications.

I am proud to call Logan my home. I am proud of my business, my family and my home, and continually seek to ensure that our community is the best place to live in Logan. As a fully committed participant in the Little Flock Worship Centre at Acacia Ridge Baptist Church, I thank God every day for delivering me from the turmoil of the Congo, and for the wonderful life I and my family have here today in Logan.

FINAL WORDS

Thanks to all those who have laboured, served, assisted and fellowshiped in the church over the years. Thank you also to everyone from Acacia Ridge Baptist Church who contributed personal testimonies to this small 50 year commemorative anniversary publication, provided photos, or even just passed on valuable contact details. Your passion has ensured that the devoted efforts of people over decades, who established the church and kept its doors open in the service of God, are rightfully acknowledged. In many cases, their stories have allowed them to speak to us, and live on. When we began gathering content for this humble publication, many former congregation figures were just names on paper. Gradually, we came to either actually meet them or communicate with some of them. Other old friends also re-emerged from the past. To the north in the Whitsunday's, south to Dubbo, and west to Boonah, many great Christian people gave generously of their time by providing personal accounts. In turn, they have often enhanced our knowledge of how the church once operated, and the evangelical energy that was here, driven by the large numbers in the congregation. Today, we might not have those numbers, but the church is enriched by its new multicultural character, together with the Little Flock Worship Centre and Tongan congregations

who also worship here. We all continue to pray to be ongoing examples of God working in our lives, and therefore the life of Acacia Ridge Baptist Church.



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