

## PASTORS AND LEADERS



May Mission Month is a celebration of the work of Australian Baptists together in global mission to reach the least-reached.

Let's discover how growing our dependence on the True Vine can spur us to branch out and share Jesus' message of hope.



**GLOBAL  
INTERACTION**

Australian Baptists  
together in global mission

## *Get ready...*

Over four weeks in May, together we will **pray, share** and **give** so that we might see least-reached communities empowered to develop their own distinctive ways of following Jesus.

In these pages you'll find thought-provoking reflections and practical ideas to inspire and engage your faith community, as together we explore the challenging words of Jesus:

***'I am the vine and you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.'* John 15:5**

Australian Baptist churches, through partnership with Global Interaction, have been branching out for over 135 years. Today there are pioneering ministries among least-reached people groups in Malawi, Mozambique, Cambodia, Thailand, Central Asia, South Asia, South East Asia and the Silk Road Area.

We also continue to support and equip established faith communities through our ongoing relationships in Outback Australia, Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India, Lebanon, Thailand, Papua, Papua New Guinea, as well as Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Together we have seen hundreds of thousands of lives transformed by Jesus.

We pray that throughout May your church will **pray, share** and **give** so that we might continue to see our work together grow and flourish as people's lives are eternally transformed.

Is there anything that, together, we cannot achieve for the Kingdom of Heaven?

# *Make an impact this May*



## **Serve**

Gather a group and participate in Xpose (local Community) or Global Xposure (Africa, Asia or Outback Australia) to experience mission in action.



## **Pray**

Join us with daily prayer for our ministry during May and pray throughout the year with Hotline and Pray Daily.



## **Give**

Get behind a worker or team project to enable the message of Jesus to be shared. Giving envelopes are available.



## **Learn**

Download the Ekteino App and take the 4 week discipleship challenge as a group.



## **Advocate**

Contact Global Interaction and become an advocate for our ministry. Sign up to receive our newsletters and like us on Facebook.

*Thank you...*

### **Global Interaction's prayer for you:**

“Lord, we thank you for the ongoing prayer and support of Baptist churches across Australia. We thank you for the way that so many give faithfully to see your work done around the world.

We pray that you bless each church with new and vibrant opportunities to share your love in their local communities – and that more people, both here in Australia and among the least-reached, will come to know you.

In Jesus name. Amen.”

# Week One

*'I am the vine and you are the branches...'*

## Food for thought

God designed humanity to be connected and nurtured by Him.

**The idea of God's people as branches connected to Him as the Vine, highlights the deep and wonderful relationship of God with His people.**

For the disciples listening to Jesus as He spoke these now famous words, the idea of God's people connected to the vine as branches, was not a new one. Throughout the Old Testament we see that the people of Israel were God's branches reaching out to the world.

Today, through the work of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit we continue to reach out, so that more might experience a life-giving relationship with God.

One of the places we have seen this happen is Bangladesh. The first Baptist cross-cultural workers went to the hindu background least-reached Bengali and Garo people over 135 years ago. Today there are more than 650 churches and whole communities eternally transformed.

**And the story continues.** Right now, there are many candidates responding to the call of God to go and share the message of Jesus. Individuals, couples and families are being mobilised to branch out cross-culturally on behalf of the Australian Baptist community through the giving and prayer of faithful people.

It's exciting to be part of the truth that Jesus spoke of so many years ago, as together we share the love of Jesus and invite people to connect with the God who designed and created them.

# Bringing it home

## → Pray together

Join us in praying for our candidates and cross-cultural workers throughout this week. You might decide to pray for one person or family, or cross-cultural team.

As a reminder to pray, choose something you do regularly over the course of the week and commit to pray each time you do it. For example, every time you walk into a shop, check Facebook or have a coffee, take a moment to pray.

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## → Share together

Hear how God is working by inviting a Global Interaction candidate to share their journey towards cross-cultural mission in your church or small group.

Contact your State Office to arrange this.

Meet the candidates in your state: [www.globalinteraction.org.au/Candidates](http://www.globalinteraction.org.au/Candidates)

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## → Give together

Consider how you and your church or small group might help the candidates begin their ministry sooner.

If 50 people gave \$50 for each of the four weeks of May Mission Month, this would raise \$10,000 to help candidates reach their financial targets.

What might your community be able to do?

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## ▶ Watch together

'Branching Out' 30 second animation

[www.globalinteraction.org.au/MMMvideos](http://www.globalinteraction.org.au/MMMvideos)



# Week Two

*'If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit...'*

## Food for thought

As we have discovered, Jesus' message to his disciples in John 15:5 was one of relationship. A deep connection between God the creator and His creation.

**In these few words, Jesus calls us to draw close to Him while assuring us that He will do the same. And as we depend on Him, something miraculous happens – we bear fruit.**

It would seem God's intention is that this relationship will be something that develops, grows and is shared.

Still today, approximately 42% of people on Earth have little or no chance to hear the message of Jesus in a way that makes sense to them. While this statistic is staggering, Global Interaction cross-cultural workers are in communities around the world, sharing the fruit of their God-centred relationship with those who have not yet heard.

One way they're doing this, is through ministry projects.

Ministry projects open the way for local people to come into contact with cross-cultural workers, and over time experience the astounding message of Jesus. These projects respond to the physical and spiritual needs of the community while providing a safe place to build friendships. As the friendships grow we see more and more people who once had little or no opportunity to discover Jesus, meet Him.

**It is a true privilege that together as the Australian Baptist family, we are able to play such a significant part in God's plan as the Gospel vine bears more fruit.**

# *Bringing it home*

## → Pray together

Join us in praying for the cross-cultural workers and local people who will meet this week as part of a ministry project.

If you feel like being creative with prayer, hand out coloured pieces of paper to your small group or church. Ask them to write their prayers on the paper and then stick them on the walls, creating a colourful mosaic of prayer. Continue to add more and more prayers (and colour) over the month of May.

Once you come to the end of the month, take a photo or gather the prayers and send them to a cross-cultural worker or team.

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## → Share together

Share stories in your church or with your small group about how you are experiencing God's work in your own life. Consider how you as individuals and as a group are 'bearing fruit' in your own community. What are you doing? What might you begin?

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## → Give together

Jump on the Global Interaction website and explore the projects and activities that are meeting physical and spiritual needs of least-reached people groups.

Choose one that you can commit to pray for and support financially across the month of May (and beyond!).

[www.globalinteraction.org.au/MMMprojects](http://www.globalinteraction.org.au/MMMprojects)

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## ▶ Watch together

'Make an Impact' 30 second animation

[www.globalinteraction.org.au/MMMvideos](http://www.globalinteraction.org.au/MMMvideos)

# Week Three

*'... apart from me you can do nothing.'*

## Food for thought

Jesus reminds us that without Him, we can do nothing - nothing of real, eternal value.

**It can be a little hard to hear that all our striving, hard work and great ideas mean very little if God is not at the centre. And yet Jesus' message is clear - without the Vine, the branches wither and die.**

Whether we're chatting to our neighbour next door in suburban Australia or over a bowl of curry in rural Thailand, we partner with God in His vast plan of salvation as we share our faith in Him.

Global Interaction believes that God's greatest gift for any person is a life-transforming relationship with Jesus. In reaching the least-reached, our teams and workers are totally reliant on God.

To share the message of Jesus among the least-reached effectively, we know that it will take:

- **Dependence on God** – discerning God's unique leading and direction and committing to a faith-filled response
- **Contextualised Gospel** – expressing faith in Jesus in ways that make it understandable and accessible within different cultures
- **Innovation** – creative thinking and appropriate risk taking
- **Authentic relationships** – based on respect, trust, compassion and honesty.
- **Teamwork** – working together for a common goal
- **Sustainability** – ministry and practice that deliver long-term Kingdom benefits
- **Life-long learning** – continual, focused and intentional learning and development that equips and resources each person for life and ministry

While these values are core to the work of Global Interaction, they speak into the context of every follower of Jesus who wants to meaningfully share their faith.



# *Bringing it home*

## → Pray together

Pray for the many people groups around the world who are just beginning to discover Jesus. Pray for wisdom for the cross-cultural workers as they walk beside individuals and community groups whose lives are being transformed by Jesus.

If you haven't already, download the May Mission Month prayer diary to help you pray each day in May for the ministry of Global Interaction.

[www.globalinteraction.org.au/MMMprayer](http://www.globalinteraction.org.au/MMMprayer)

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## → Share together

Share with your church or small group a moment in your life where you realised your total dependence on God. Imagine together what it might feel like for someone who is discovering this for the first time.

Invite a Global Interaction cross-cultural worker or candidate to share their story of faith and reliance on God. Contact your State Office to arrange this.

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## → Give together

Global Interaction works among least-reached people groups and supports established faith communities around Africa, Asia and Outback Australia. Take the time to get to know more about a particular people group and their specific needs.

Ask yourselves: how might we support this people group so that they will hear the message of Jesus?

To learn more: [www.globalinteraction.org.au/PeopleGroups](http://www.globalinteraction.org.au/PeopleGroups)

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## ▶ Watch together

'Together' 30 second animation

[www.globalinteraction.org.au/MMMvideos](http://www.globalinteraction.org.au/MMMvideos)

# Week Four

***'I am the vine and you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing'. John 15:5***

## Food for thought

Over the month of May we have explored the different aspects of this challenging verse.

We have considered the deep relationship of God with His people (us!) and the miraculous, life-changing fruit this relationship produces with God at the centre.

**As we come to the end of May, we now need to consider what God might be calling us to do, as living, growing, active branches of His mighty Vine.**

It would seem that if we're connected with the Vine, not bearing fruit is not an option. The overflow of God's love and work in our lives will show glimpses of God and bring to life the message of Jesus to those who are ready to hear.

Among least-reached people groups today there are many who are ready to hear. God has been preparing their hearts and minds for His message – they are just waiting for someone to share it in a way that makes sense to them.

Global Interaction teams continue to do just this – live out the message of Jesus among least-reached communities so that all might have the opportunity to discover who He is. And while many are beginning to explore Jesus and come to faith, the work is far from finished.

Could God be calling you to share His message among the least-reached? Might God challenge your church to raise up workers from within your faith community?

**How amazing it is that the God of the universe has chosen us as His partners, so that His plan might become real in the lives of people from all nations.**

# *Bringing it home*

## → Pray together

Set aside time in your church service or small group to pray for your local community. If you can, encourage everyone to go outside and walk around the community as they pray that God might:

- Strengthen and empower your church and small group as you branch out in your community
  - Raise up people from within your group who will be willing to serve cross-culturally
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## → Share together

Share with your church or small group how you first learnt about Jesus. Who was it that introduced you to your faith? How did this impact your life?

Honestly discuss some of the things that stop or hinder you sharing your faith. Together consider how you might be able to overcome these things, so that you might have the opportunity to share with someone who does not yet know Jesus.

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## → Give together

Why not organise a group from your church to be part of a Global Xposure short-term mission trip?

Or if there are people in your faith community who are keen to explore cross-cultural mission – could your group sponsor them to volunteer with a Global Interaction team as they discern what God might have for their lives?

For more information on how to get involved:  
[www.globalinteraction.org.au/Serve](http://www.globalinteraction.org.au/Serve)



empowering communities to develop their  
own distinctive ways of following Jesus

[www.globalinteraction.org.au](http://www.globalinteraction.org.au)