

Resonate

ISSUE 31

May Mission Month

SPECIAL EDITION

PLUS

Do Re Mi Us...

The benefits of communal singing



**GLOBAL
INTERACTION**

Australian Baptists
together in global mission



Hello... from the editor

Welcome to the 'stepping out' edition of Resonate. In this issue, we meet everyday people saying YES to God and to where He's leading them, even if (or when) it means stepping out of their comfort zones. We were created in His image, for a mission. So if you've been sitting comfortably for the first months of the year... it's time for a shake up!

Our theme for May Mission Month 2018 comes from John 15 where Jesus speaks of the intimate relationship between the Vine (Jesus), the Vine Grower (God) and the branches (us). May Mission Month invites you to branch out with Global Interaction, reaching out among least-reached people groups to build relationships with those God is preparing to know Him.

With so many people on earth never having the opportunity to hear the Good News in their own heart language, we are called to respond by praying, giving, learning and importantly... going. Our vision is for the least-reached, for people of all cultures and faith backgrounds, to meet Jesus and follow Him in a way that makes sense within their culture and community.

In this edition, Cathie Staunton, our amazing VIC/TAS Young Adults Consultant has taken the theme for May Mission Month, given it a shake up and written a Bible study for small groups. We also meet our new 'Adventures with...' stars, Craig and Kim Barnes who are about to join the team in Cambodia. Plus, get ready to open your heart (and lungs) to the undeniable benefits of communal singing.

Resonate is for you! We'd love to hear your feedback. Do you love to write and have a passion for global mission? Let us know... Please email, info@globalinteraction.org.au

— *Teagan*

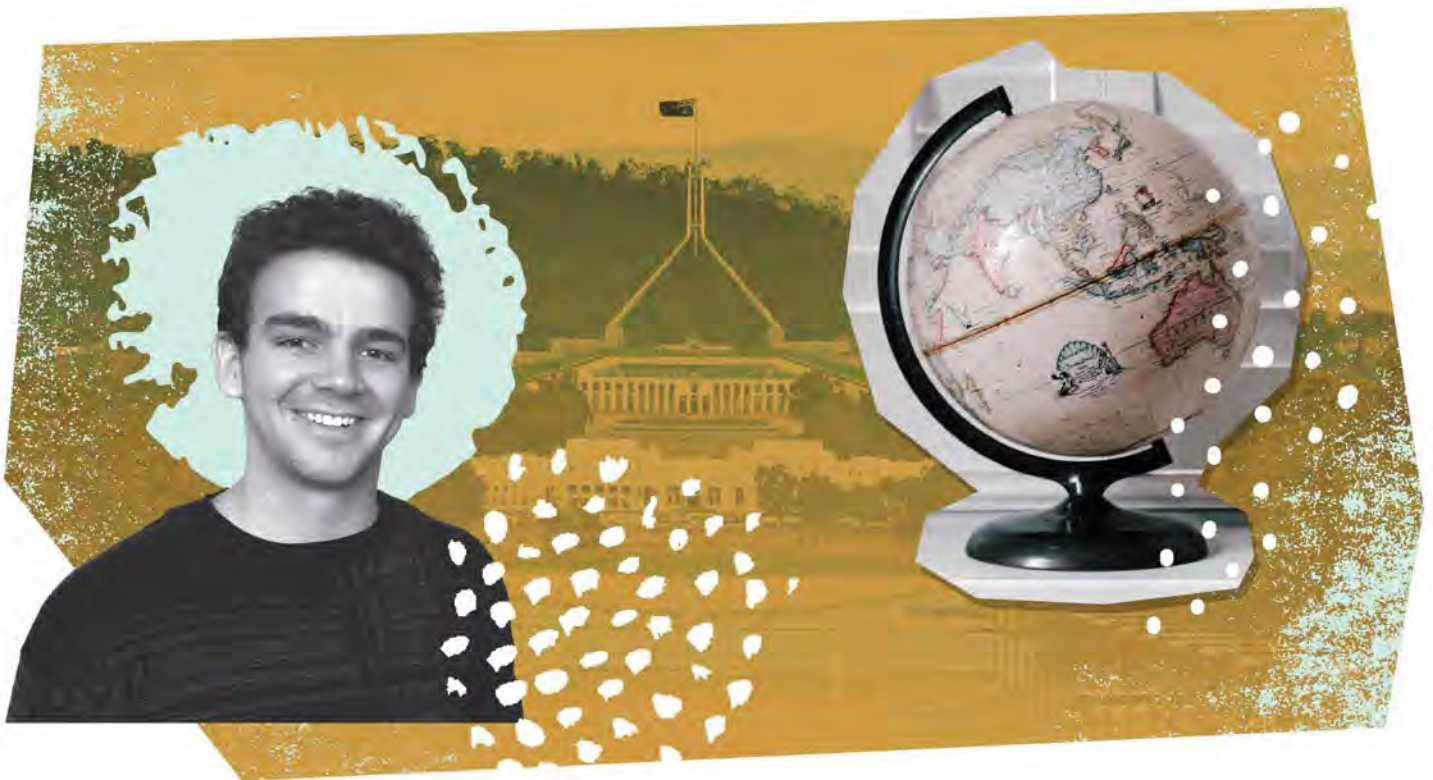


"Our passion is to join with God in reaching the least-reached people of our world. We share the Gospel by learning their culture, speaking their heart language and deeply engaging with people in their spiritual and physical needs. We believe God's greatest gift is a life transforming relationship with Jesus."



15 MINUTES WITH *Zac*

Zak, a 21 year old uni student from Canberra has recently returned from a six week stint with the Global Interaction cross-cultural team in South East Asia. At the end of this year he'll graduate as a primary school teacher, and after that?... Who knows what God has in store for this mission-minded young adult!



You've just been in South East Asia to spend time with our team... what did you learn?

The experience allowed me to connect the dots between my passion for cross-cultural mission and what actually happens on the ground. I learnt from cross-cultural workers who really know their stuff and I asked a lot of questions. My preconceived ideas were greatly challenged and I came out of it with a better understanding of myself and my journey with God.

What do you say to friends considering experiencing cross-cultural mission for themselves?

Be proactive! I used to see cross-cultural workers as the 'celebrities' of the Christian world. I now know that by seeing it like that, I am missing out on the rest of the picture. God has a job for all of us to do as part of His Kingdom. If you feel like you are being called to cross-cultural mission work, praise God. Pursue it. If not, then seek God and find what He is asking you to do.

Is God calling you towards cross-cultural mission?

I believe so. I have been seeking out God's will for my life for a long time. Through encouragement from others and growth in my relationship with God, I see myself serving God in this way (for as long as He wants me to). I have a passion for the culture and language I was immersed in while in South East Asia, but that being said, I didn't have a strong 'yep, this is it' moment. God will call me somewhere and I am staying open to that.

As a young adult in your church, are you inspiring others... or are others inspiring you?

My Bible study group will tell you that I can't stop talking about seeking God's Kingdom in a cross-cultural context. But I am also incredibly blessed to be surrounded by a whole bunch of motivated young adults who are pursuing God in their own contexts. Do I inspire others? I have been told I do. Do others inspire me? Absolutely.

Over the summer you participated in Global Interaction's Strategic Mission Week. What's one key thing you took away from this course?

People of different cultures worship Jesus in very different ways than I do. Often that makes me uncomfortable. When I think about it though, God's people worshipping him in every language, through dance, art and stories is one of the best things about being part of the Kingdom of God.

What's next for you?

Finish Uni at the end of the year, get a job as a primary school teacher then find a way to fit in Bible College. Then, when the time is right I'll go off to wherever God wants me.

Sit back and get (UN)COMFORTABLE

If you have recently visited a train station in Melbourne, you will have seen the 'safety zone'. It's distinguishable by its bright yellow lines painted on the platform, signage and proximity to the platform's entrance. I appreciate that it's there, however, in order to get on the train and move forward on my journey, I have to step out of the safety zone rectangle.

It's the same for our lives. Our regular routines help us maintain a productive and balanced life. If we are not careful though, a routine day can become a routine life. The routine can become our life's yellow painted lines on the platform that keep us safe and comfortable, but at the same time, keep us from stepping out and moving forward.

In our comfort zones, we do what we've done before, we don't challenge ourselves and we definitely don't do anything we might fail at. In our comfort zones, we pat ourselves on the back and think it was all us. But God didn't intend for us to live in our comfort zones. The more comfortable we are, the easier it is to think we can rely on ourselves rather than God. We were created by Him, to be nourished by Him and to bear fruit. As we rely on Him and His provision, we can branch out from a place of comfort to a place of freedom in Him.

Cross-cultural worker, David, shares what this looks like for him in the Silk Road Area, "I step out of my comfort zone every time I need to engage with new people (which is often!). I found meeting new people uncomfortable in Australia, but without being fluent in the local language, it's especially uncomfortable here on the Silk Road. I can have the words to say in my head, but when I meet someone new, they disappear. However, I know I have to talk to them. If we are to build relationships and share the message of Jesus, then I have to push myself out of my comfort zone and speak. And so, with God's strength, I do."

Zoe in the National Office recalls the last time she stepped out of her comfort zone, "As an administrator, I like to plan... everything! I recently took an international work trip for another

organisation I do consultancy work with. Just before leaving Australia, I found out that the in-country partners were on holidays and I panicked! Through my Masters I had extensive intellectual knowledge of the country, however, I also knew actually being there was going to be a very different story. I arrived, managed to get a sim card, a meal and my bearings and decided to trust God. In an unknown place, completely out of my comfort zone, I made the choice to invite God to develop the heart knowledge I needed as well as head knowledge. I chose to see the country through Jesus' perspective. In coming home, I am seeking to see my friends, family and life through His eyes too."

As a follower of Jesus, how are you being challenged to step out of your comfort zone?

6 ways to push you out of your comfort zone

1. Read the Bible in the lunch room at work
2. Download Ekteino discipleship app and do it!
3. Study Global Interaction's Moved series with your small group
4. Go on a Global Xposure team visit
5. Seek God's will in your decision making
6. Ask God to give you opportunities to step out of your comfort zone (dangerous, I know!)





ADVENTURES WITH THE BARNES

Episode
Nº1

For the past three years Luke and Belle have let us into their world and taken us on the journey of their first term serving in Thailand. As they welcome a new little baby into their family, we welcome Craig and Kim Barnes as our new 'Adventures With...' stars. They've said YES to God and now they're taking a deep breath, packing their bags and about to arrive in Cambodia to begin their cross-cultural adventure. Over to you Kim!



If you had told me a few years ago, that now I would be living part time in a caravan with four

kids travelling around speaking in churches I would not have believed it! Over and over, our lives have been transformed by saying YES to God. I know full well that it will be a huge challenge and my comfort zones will be stretched again and again. But experience tells me that this is ok and we will never be stretched beyond what we can bear.

We are hoping to be in Cambodia very soon. We have sold most of our possessions and have kept saying YES to what God is calling us to. Little by little God is nudging, pushing, pulling, opening doors and closing others, shaping our family for the mission He has for us. As we look back over the past years and look ahead to the coming years we can undoubtedly see God's guidance. What once seemed far out of our comfort zone, now doesn't seem so far at all. Cambodia, here we come...!

Very soon we will be moving to live with our four children in Cambodia! How on earth did we get to be doing this!

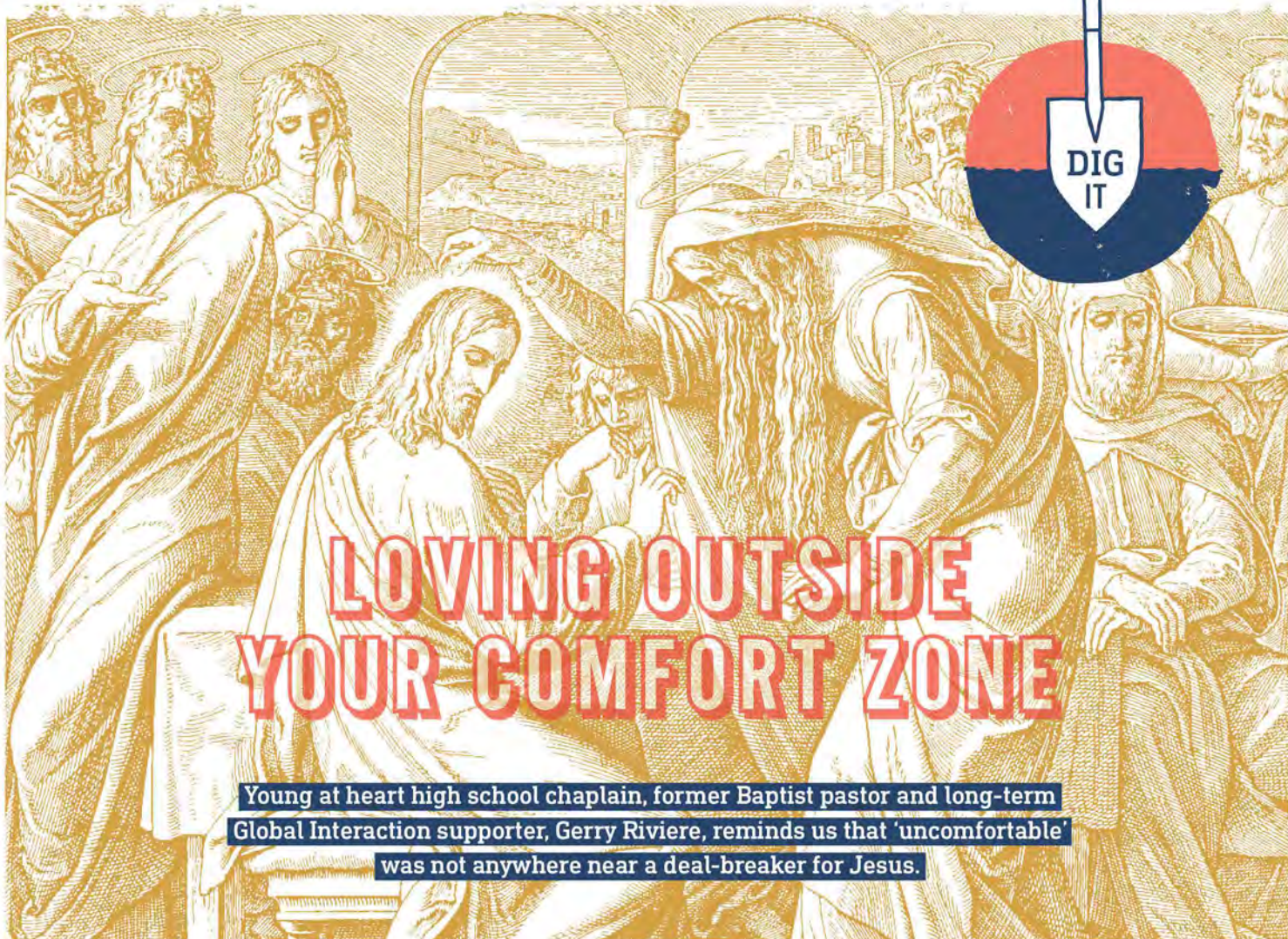
A few years ago I watched a movie where the main character was challenged to say YES to everything for an entire year. His life went from safe to adventurous, filled with people and things he never would have otherwise known. I feel a bit like this is what our journey into cross-cultural mission has been like. When we said YES to God, He very quickly took us out of our comfort zone and out of the places where we weren't fully living for His glory.

Craig and I were living a very comfortable life with good careers, a house in a great location and good schools picked out for our children. We saw the life of success and security that we were building for ourselves but couldn't ignore the niggling feeling that



there must be more to life than just being comfortable. We began asking God seriously what else He had for us.

As we began to say YES to God He took us out of our comfort zone step by step. Firstly it was selling our house, then it was leaving our jobs and moving interstate so Craig could study aquaculture (hugely out of his comfort zone by the way!). Perhaps the hardest YES for me was moving our family into a residential Bible college. We lived in a very international community of 80 people from all different backgrounds and I had to learn to continually say YES to God when I didn't always feel like it.



LOVING OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE

Young at heart high school chaplain, former Baptist pastor and long-term Global Interaction supporter, Gerry Riviere, reminds us that 'uncomfortable' was not anywhere near a deal-breaker for Jesus.

Jesus had a crystal clear understanding of His ministry and purpose while on earth... and being comfortable, making others comfortable, wasn't it. Jesus' ministry on earth wasn't one of laws, but one of love. His ministry wasn't one of 'keeping the peace', but one of being and sharing true peace. Jesus loved in a way that sometimes made others uncomfortable.

2000 years ago, Jesus stood in the synagogue in Nazareth and opened the scroll of Isaiah to read these words, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me for He has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor.' And so began his ministry to all people – but especially to those marginalised and rejected by others.

I think of the incident described in Luke 7:36-50 in which a woman who had experienced much rejection and isolation from her community, courageously enters the home of a Pharisee in the hope that Jesus would accept her sacrificial offering. This is a fascinating story on many levels. The Pharisees saw a sinful woman not worthy of their association.

However, Jesus saw a desperate and damaged person, made in the image of God and loved by Him, hoping against hope that Jesus would treat her differently to every other male she knew.

And He did. Not only did Jesus allow her to bring her offering, but He did not flinch as she dried His feet with her hair. Nor did He shift in His seat uncomfortably when she began kissing His feet. Can you imagine the atmosphere at that moment in the Pharisee Simon's home? Imagine the tut tutting and looks of disgust. This was scandalous and it was happening in the home of someone who prided himself on his 'righteousness'.

Yet, imagine too the healing that was taking place in this woman's life. Jesus was making himself of no reputation so as to welcome a broken person and invite them to experience God's loving acceptance and forgiveness. This woman was experiencing the 'Good News' and it was the best experience she had ever had.

Every city and town has damaged and broken people. It is increasingly unlikely that they will wander into our churches.

So if they are to receive the Good News, it will be because we take steps to meet them where they are, sharing Jesus and demonstrating His love even when it takes us out of our comfort zone. In some churches, groups bake biscuits and cakes to give to young women trapped in the massage parlour industry, in other churches people visit and support asylum seekers who are traumatised and frightened by their experiences and others offer friendship and meals to those marginalised in their community.

We cannot do everything, but we can all choose to be and share the Good News of Jesus with those in our community it's easier to ignore. Who are the overlooked and marginalised people in your neighbourhood? Explore ways that you (and some like-minded friends) can be Good News to them.

Jesus loved in a way that made others uncomfortable, He broke rules and allowed people to touch Him that the Pharisees believed shouldn't have even been speaking to Him. He calls us to follow His example of radical love even when it means stepping out of our comfort zones.

MAY MISSION MONTH BIBLE STUDY



Key Text John 15:1-17

¹ "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵ "I am the vine; 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. ⁶ If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

⁹ "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business.

Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other."

The foundation of our mission is a beautiful, life-giving Vine that provides sustenance, support and direction. Branches are held up by the Vine in order that they can produce heavy, lush, abundant fruit.

Our passion is to see more people in least-reached communities follow Jesus. Our prayer is that you will be part of the Vine and your branches will intertwine with ours so together, we can all produce more fruit.

So slip on the gumboots and get ready for a four session course in spiritual viticulture as together we study how we can be branches so connected to the Vine that lavish fruit is produced. (For anyone unfamiliar with 'vineyard' speak, viticulture is the science of grapes.)

We pick up the story after the disciples allow Jesus to wash their feet, hear Him predict His own betrayal and death and then comfort them with the promise of the Holy Spirit. The air in the room must have been stifling, thick with emotion, confusion, anxiety and doubt. Perhaps this is why Jesus announces, "Come now, let us leave."

And Jesus leads his disciples up to a vineyard. He says, "I am the true vine..."

Session 1

We are branches!

Have you ever seen grapevines grow along the ground? Without being a viticulturist (i.e. someone who knows a lot about vineyards) we can still understand that grapes grow best when they're grown on a supporting trellis and when they have a gardener to tend to and train the branches of the vine.

What would happen if the branches were left to grow across the ground? They would get dirty, trampled on, and be more susceptible to disease and pests.

JOHN 15:1-4

¹ "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

IN THESE VERSES:

- > Jesus uses an everyday, familiar plant to teach and speak to the disciples
- > God is identified as a gardener who nurtures and sustains the Vine and the branches
- > The disciples are reminded that they have been created and cleansed to have a deep relationship with God through Jesus
- > Jesus is also bringing the disciples back to their Jewish teaching where the people of Israel were referred to as God's branches reaching out to the world

Global Interaction branches out across Africa, Asia and Outback Australia through cross-cultural workers who are called by God to invite people to meet Jesus in a real and culturally relevant way.

For over 135 years Australian Baptists have supported God's mission, and through the work of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit we continue to reach out, so that more people may experience a life-giving relationship with God.

PONDER. DISCUSS. ACT.

- > How does Jesus speak to you in your everyday life and what does He use to teach you?
- > What has God pruned back in your life? How does God nurture and sustain you?
- > Catch up with a cross-cultural worker or candidate and ask them how they have heard from Jesus in their calling to cross-cultural work. (Contact your State Office to connect with candidates and cross-cultural workers.)
- > Pray for our cross-cultural workers to remain in the Vine and branch out further. For prayer ideas, visit www.globalinteraction.org.au/pray
- > How can you seek God in your everyday in order to become a healthier branch and hear God's calling on your life?

May Mission Month

Session 2

We must remain

The word remain is a verb, an action word. What does 'to remain' mean to you? We can think of related words like abide, stay, wait or even endure, persist and last. These are all things that we actively have to choose to do.

When Jesus was talking to His disciples in the vineyard He knew that difficult times were ahead. But He also knew that if His disciples endured the trauma and grief that was to follow they were to bear much fruit. Jesus was urging His disciples to stay steadfast in their devotion to Him and their faith in God because He knew what the coming weeks held. Jesus knew the bigger picture, however the disciples were yet to understand. Once again the Vine was able to keep things simple and illustrate what the disciples needed to do.

JOHN 15:5-8

⁵ "I am the vine; 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. ⁶ If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

THESE VERSES SHOW US THAT:

- > We can only bear fruit through staying connected to Jesus
- > Remaining is a reciprocal process... Jesus wants to be close to us as well!
- > There is consequence to not remaining in Jesus
- > But there is so much more to gain from remaining in Him

For our cross-cultural workers to be sustained in their, sometimes challenging, work, they need to build up a trusty toolbox of spiritual disciplines. These practices not only allow them to remain in Christ and empower their work, but also can be used as tools to connect with those they desperately want to share the message of Jesus with. And the same can be true for you as well.

PONDER. DISCUSS. ACT.

- > What's more important, our devotion to Jesus or our service to Him? Why?
- > When do you feel most connected to God? How do you 'remain' in Him?
- > Do some research on spiritual disciplines? Read a book or chat to a mentor. Which spiritual disciplines resonate with you? Try them out!
- > Explore a spiritual practice that you haven't tried before. Challenge yourself to give it a go and reflect on your experience.
- > Read the previous Resonate article on attentiveness www.globalinteraction.org.au/SharingFaithPart2 and find out how our cross-cultural workers are using this spiritual practice.

May Mission Month

Session 3

Abundant fruit

Did you know it takes a vine up to three years to produce grapes? The yield will always depend on how well the vine has been cared for and pruned.

Jesus isn't exactly clear what the fruit signifies when He speaks to the disciples. It is thought that it is the fruit of God's mission, of more people following Jesus' example. Others connect this passage directly with the fruits of the Spirit, the characteristics of a life lived to glorify God that we read about in Galatians 5. Overarching this is the idea that the fruit is a manifestation of living the divine life itself, knowing God and knowing His love.

JOHN 15:8-11

⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. ⁹ "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

THESE VERSES CELEBRATE THAT:

- > Our fruitfulness is an example of Christ that brings God glory
- > We are loved!
- > Jesus desires us to be joy filled
- > Obedience in Christ is all about love and joy

In 1969 Yvonne and Ian and their three young children boarded a plane from India to return to Melbourne. After six years serving with Global Interaction in the state of Assam in North East India it was time to return for home assignment. When they left their small village of Tukrajhar there was approximately 30 faith communities dotted across the area. They were looking forward to returning after their home assignment to continue to support the Boro people of Assam.

Unfortunately, changes in the Indian Government's religious visa laws meant that they never did return to Tukrajhar and were the last Baptist cross-cultural workers to serve in that area. However, the Holy Spirit continued to move and the local believers responded. Today there are over 300 churches that make up the Boro Baptist Church Association. These are the fruits of the Global Interaction branches that we joyfully celebrate today.

PONDER. DISCUSS. ACT.

- > Investigate the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5. Which fruits do other people see in you? Ask someone you trust. Which fruits could God be working in you to develop?
- > Take time to celebrate the fruit that has come from you remaining in Jesus. Write a list, draw a picture, pray a prayer of praise and share with a friend over a big bowl of juicy grapes or lunch at a vineyard.
- > Get in touch with a cross-cultural worker and ask them to share a story of the fruits God has produced through their work. This is what our workers love to talk about! (Contact your State Office to connect with cross-cultural workers.)
- > Get excited about the fruitfulness of our ministry in Thailand among the Ethnic Thai. You can read about Ethnic Thai believers being equipped to lead faith communities of their own people in this article: www.globalinteraction.org.au/Celebrating
- > Wait in anticipation for the fruit that God will produce in you in the future. Think about how you can be obedient to Him in order to be fruitful and be filled with love and joy. What does being filled with joy and love feel and look like for you?

May Mission Month

MAY MISSION MONTH PRAYER DIARY

It's incredible to think of, but God, the creator of the universe, listens to us when we pray and loves it when we spend time with Him. Throughout May Mission Month (and beyond!) can you add Global Interaction's ministry onto your prayer list each day?

Below is an overview of our May Mission Month prayer diary.
For the more detailed prayer diary, please visit www.globalinteraction.org.au/MMMprayer

The Least-Reached

Tues 1 – Fri 4 May

Global Interaction's passion is to join with God in reaching the least-reached. Our cross-cultural workers share the Gospel by learning culture and language, and deeply engaging with people's spiritual and physical needs.

- > Hearts to be sensitive to God's call
- > Eyes of least-reached to be opened
- > Australian church will build up and send more workers
- > Pastors will advocate for global mission

Scripture: Matthew 28:19-20

Spiritual Life

Sat 5 – Wed 9 May

Cross-cultural workers are living and working in countries where spirituality is strong, and the worship of counterfeit gods, prophets, belief systems and practices surrounds them.

- > Spiritual protection for workers
- > Personal spiritual growth for workers
- > God's Spirit to draw near to workers and local believers
- > Spiritual bondages to be broken within least-reached communities
- > Fruits of the Spirit will manifest through our ministry

Scripture: Ephesians 6:12

Culture and Language

Thurs 10 – Mon 14 May

God created all of humanity in His image. We believe that all people – of all cultures and faith backgrounds – should have the opportunity to hear the message of Jesus. Still today, 42% of people on earth have little or no chance to hear the message of Jesus in a way that makes sense to them.

- > Language will not be a barrier to faith-sharing
- > Deep cultural insight and understanding for workers
- > Workers to find common ground with local friends
- > God to prepare hearts of local language nurturers to meet Jesus
- > Christmas and Easter to provide opportunities to share Jesus' story

Scripture: 2 Peter 3:9



Do Re Mi Us — The benefits of communal

New recruit to the National Office and choir lover, Andrea Fleming, investigates why it feels so good to sing.

From the Ancient Greek choruses to the flash mobs of the early 2000s and everything in between, communal singing has always played an important role in society. Singing together breaks down barriers, builds confidence, offers an outlet and unifies a group. Not to mention the magic of creating a strong and beautiful chorus of many individual voices becoming one.

We see across all cultures, languages and faith communities that groups of people are unified when they sing together. It is a kind of hospitality which we can invite and welcome others into... whether they are in tune or not!

While serving in Papua, Val Holt, Director of Member Care, remembers the Dani people singing together as they worked on a big project. Val shares, "On one occasion, a group of 20 or so men were charged with the task of dismantling a significantly large building and removing the rubble from its built location to another. They sang as they worked. **The singing seemed to unify them in this task, kept the momentum going and strengthened them as a team and community.**"

Walt White, Global Consultant for Community Movements, was struck by a quote from Indian missionary Shadhu Sundar Singh. It read, "Many shadus (holy men) have become theologically Christian, but have taken a decision not to associate themselves with the Christian church, but rather to take a role like John the Baptist, to prepare India to become Christian in an Indian way." Walt recalled this quote following an afternoon with a group of believers in a small village in South India.

Together they sang songs, songs that they had been taught by a wandering shadu and some they had made themselves. The songs expressed their unique relationship with God and they worshiped together, following Jesus within their own culture.

Individually, there are benefits as well. A study undertaken by Swinburne University of Technology's Centre for Social Impact, reported that 98% of participants found singing to be a great way to de-stress and 81% said they experienced improved wellbeing. In God's perfect design for your life and others, He intended for you to sing. How are your vocal chords... do they need some exercise? Try them out, sing in the rain, sing in the shower, sing in the morning, sing before you sit down to study, sing before you go to bed. It's a spiritual exercise and it won't require anything more than your persistence to do it.



singing

More reasons to sing:

Singing cements the words of Jesus in our heart

In Colossians 3:16, the Apostle Paul instructs us to, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God." Paul tells us that as we sing spiritual songs together, the words of Jesus dwell in our hearts. Think how much scripture you know by heart because you have sung it!

Singing strengthens our faith

Acts 16 describes Paul singing with Silas in jail. Rather than rot away, they chose to sing away. Their song of praise strengthened them, refocused their minds from their earthly suffering to their heavenly God and reaffirmed their trust in Him. Their song was also a witness to those listening.

Singing brings us closer to God

Ephesians 5:18-20 highlights the relationship between singing praises and being filled with the Spirit. It says, "be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs..." Proclaiming truths about God through song brings us closer to Him and grows our relationship with Him.

Even more reasons to sing:

- > **Psalm 84:4**
Blessed are those who dwell in your house, ever **singing** your praise!
- > **Psalm 100:2**
Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with **singing**!
- > **Psalm 105:43**
So he brought his people out with joy, his chosen ones with **singing**.
- > **Song of Solomon 2:12**
The flowers appear on the earth, the time of **singing** has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.
- > **2 Samuel 22:50**
For this I will praise you, O Lord, among the nations, and **sing** praises to your name.

The Apostle John in Revelation 7:9-10, describes a great multitude of people from every tribe, people groups and languages singing before the Lamb, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" As we branch out for May Mission Month, maybe you can use singing to reach out to others in your community? Singing is a great way to connect with people. If your church doesn't have a group to sing with, start one up! Invite people outside your church community. Use it as a mission opportunity – there are so many songs that can sow seeds of faith for friends who haven't met Jesus yet. Think of all the 70's hippies singing Boney M's Rivers of Babylon!



Get Involved

Home School Teacher

For some cross-cultural families, home schooling is the only viable option for their children's education. In order for both parents to focus their time on ministry, volunteers are encouraged to join families and take on the responsibility of home schooling the children.



Do you tick the boxes?

Look at the list below and if you tick the boxes... then start the conversation with your State Office team.

- > Bachelor Degree or equivalent experience
- > Interested in mission
- > Available 3 – 12 months (the longer the better!)
- > Enjoy working with children and can keep them on task
- > Flexible and adaptable to a cross-cultural setting
- > Able to work independently
- > Able to Self-fund
- > Keen to experience life in another culture



GLOBAL INTERACTION

Empowering communities to develop their own distinctive ways of following Jesus
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Designed by Studio 164a
164a.com

Edited by Teagan Dwyer-Riviere

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