

## Foundations Celebration Sunday May 28, 10am/6pm

### Our Goals

Celebration Sunday offering:  
\$30,000

Three year pledges: (including your upfront offering)  
\$240,000

### A Personal message from Pastor Ian

When people come to our church, they often remark to me about the sense of purpose and faith that they see among us. It's important that they understand that it's not just the leadership who are faith people... the whole church is. When you consider our experience with The Bridge, you soon realise we've been on an inspiring journey of faith. Over the last three years, together we've purchased and renovated the warehouse which is now home to our Offices and midweek Ministries. For those of you who were here, do you remember our very first Foundations Offering on June 1, 2003? \$111,000 in cash and cheques!

This May, we'll look back over the last three years. It's been a road of sacrifice for many! We'll celebrate God's faithfulness to us!

This May, we'll look forward to the next three years. We'll dream! We'll anticipate what God wants to accomplish through us! We're in for an awesome time together.

This May, I'll be asking every person who's a part of Community Church Hornsby to join Christine and me as we recommit ourselves to be a part of Jesus' dream for our church and to rededicate ourselves to outworking the responsibilities he has sovereignly appointed for us at this unique time. I'll be calling people to participate in our bold Foundations initiative for the next three years. We'll do outstanding things if we do them together, and if we do them fully trusting in the powerful grace and leading of Jesus Christ.

I invite you to take part in this historic occasion as we take one more step towards accomplishing our war cry "Impacting Communities for Christ".

Pastor Ian

### The opportunity before us

The use of The Bridge has launched us into a new level of activity as a church. Already, we've seen the Lord bless us greatly. With our expanded facilities, we have quite literally been able to expand our ministries.

Our **Youth Ministries**, Wake and Surge, have grown dramatically, regularly seeing more than 100 teenagers worshipping Jesus here each Friday night. In fact, the facility's starting to get cramped!!

Our **Women's and Men's Ministries**, are continuing to grow. Girls on Tuesday and Tuesday Night Women, have doubled in size. Three years ago, there was very little happening in Men's Ministry at all - now they're powering on!

Our **Offices** are all occupied!! We've put on new staff, and there's an exciting buzz of activity around the place each day.

Our **Theatrette and Kitchen facilities** are being used regularly by various CCH ministries and external users.

We're growing, and we need to keep focussed on the target before us.

#### **Finish refurbishments of The Bridge (estimated \$30,000)**

We've almost finished refurbishing our mid-week Ministry Centre. We don't want it to drag out, though. How we present ourselves to our community is of vital importance. It speaks of what we think of ourselves, and more importantly, what we think of our mission and our Lord. That's one of the reasons we seek to do the best we can with the resources we have.

Air conditioning for Kitchen	\$1,500
Industrial dishwasher for Kitchen	\$1,500
Upgrade air conditioning for Theatrette	\$6,000
Rendering outside walls	\$8,000
Shopfront for back entrance	\$4,000
Finishing back storage area	\$3,000
Office infrastructure	\$4,000
Set up of counselling room	\$2,000

#### **Freeing Operating Budget from Interest and Loan repayments (we're believing for \$210,000)**

Good stewardship in God's kingdom means that we want to limit interest paid to the Bank. We want to own our facility outright. We're going for an achievable target which will greatly reduce our overall debt structure.

**Our Target... To Finish Refurbishments and greatly reduce our debt structure \$240,000**

Your Questions Answered (only a couple of these - as fillers - these aren't exhaustive either. I've got a heap of other questions in my files. I was just brainstorming with these. Is there any that you'd particularly want?)

Q: How are we going to do it?

A: This May, we're focussing on all of us reaching out to Jesus to discover how he wants us individually to help outwork this great Kingdom goal. All of us together can achieve so much more than we think possible. We will individually be asking Jesus what he would love us to give over the next three years, over and above our regular giving. On the last Sunday in May (the 28<sup>th</sup>), and we'll bring our pledges along and offer them to Jesus as part of our collective worship. We'll also bring along a special sacrificial cash offering to mark the event with a bang!

Q: What if I can't give much?

A: Everyone has something to contribute. It's not about who can give the most. That's not what Jesus is on about. Consider the widow who could only afford two small coins. It's the heart that delights to be involved at whatever level is possible that Jesus loves. But don't think little of your gift. Even \$10 a week, for three years, is a gift of over \$1500. Together, we'll achieve our \$240,000 target. Your gift, no matter how big or small, is important.

Q: Why will we make pledges and not just give as the Lord leads?

A: As a church, we want to be good stewards of God's finances. Knowing what finances to expect with the Building project will help us set appropriate goals and strategies, and will free us up to focus on the more important day to day management of our General Operating Budget.

Q: Will my gift be anonymous?

A: Yes. We will give you specially numbered envelopes to preserve your anonymity. Your individual number will only be known by the Foundations Manager, Shane Merrick. By keeping a record of our gifts, Shane can assist the budgeting process and help all of us achieve our giving goals.

Q: Why are our goals so much lower than last time?

A: Many people gave sacrificially in our first Foundations adventure. In fact, the Elders alone pledged \$235,000. That was a unique time, when we needed to purchase property with limited assets available to us. This time we're in a different situation, and we want to set a target that's sustainable for the majority of us, and still gives people the opportunity to give once again.

Q: What if we achieve more than our target?

A: We certainly won't waste it!! The Bridge is not our final destination. We need to think long term! There will come a time in our not too distant future when we will be purchasing land and purpose building a Worship

Centre for the glory of God!! That will be exciting, and the more prepared we can get for that day now, the better! If our present targets are met, we will continue the Building Fund to get us into position for land acquisition.

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\*\*\*\*\* Include Commitment Card in this issue \*\*\*\*\*  
run off enough for insertion in Church Bulletin on May 28

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### Faith Giving

... is money that God gives through you that he wouldn't give to you if you weren't going to give it away!

Proverbs 3:9-10

Honour the LORD with your wealth and with the best part of everything your land produces. Then he will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with the finest wine.

Proverbs 11:24-25

There is one who is free in giving, and yet he grows richer. And there is one who keeps what he should give, but he ends up needing more. The man who gives much will have much, and he who helps others will be helped himself.

Luke 6:38

If you give, you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full measure, pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, and running over. Whatever measure you use in giving - large or small - it will be used to measure what is given back to you.

2 Corinthians 8:7

But just as you excel in everything - in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us - see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Remember this - a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each make up your own mind as to how much you should give. Don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves the person who gives cheerfully. And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.

Matthew 6:19-20

Don't store up treasures here on earth, where they can be eaten by moths and get rusty, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where they will never become moth-eaten or rusty and where they will be safe from thieves.

1 Timothy 6:18-19 (This was on the back page of Foundations for the Future brochure, though the Scripture reference wasn't accurate!!!)

Use your money to do good... being ready to share what God has given you. By doing this you will be storing up real treasure for yourselves in heaven - it is the only safe investment for eternity! And you'll be living a fruitful Christian life down here as well.

## Discovering creative ways to increase my cash gift

On our Foundations Celebration Sunday, May 28, in both services, we are setting aside time to bring along our 3 year Commitment Cards as well as our extravagant faith cash offering. It'll be fun. Obviously, the more we are able to give in cash upfront, the quicker we ease up our cashflow.

Most people don't have that much cash laying around to do something extraordinary on May 28. *But with a little creativity, who knows what we can achieve!* And don't forget, together it will all add up.

Last time we did something like this, many people in the church did one of two things...

They looked for ways to reduce their expenses for the month (eliminated eating out for the month, did one less shopping trip for the month and ate the stockpiles in their cupboards, kept a hold of all the family's collected loose change, postpone a major purchase to release immediate funds)

They looked for ways to increase their income (held a garage sale, took a short-term second job, sold large items they were no longer using)

A couple of others had access to funds and financial facilities that enabled them to place a sizeable chunk of their 3 year pledge in the offering in one lump sum!

Be creative! See it as an adventure! Something exciting to be a part of! History in the making!! Imagine... if every man, woman, and child of us brought along \$200 each, that would be a cash offering of almost \$80,000!

## A Personal message from Pastor Ian

I love being a part of Community Church Hornsby. It's a church with a vision and a commitment to outwork that vision. For me, it's so exhilarating to dare to be everything that Jesus wants us to be.

On May 28, we have an awesome opportunity to express our faith in Jesus' leading and to do something exciting together that will have ramifications in the extension of Jesus' kingdom here in our community and beyond. As I said, I love being a part of Community Church Hornsby. I'm sure you do too!

Pastor Ian

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## Expect a miracle today!

"Quotes here from testimonies gathered - a few, as fillers"

"In response to the call to commit funds to the Foundations project, Lyn and I had pledged an opening sum of \$5,000 (with smaller annual amounts thereafter). This was a challenge for us on at least two levels; the first committing anything at all, and the second being the lack of available funds. We had been "burnt" by similar exercises at our previous church and one of the initial responses to this call was to go and find another church. As to available surplus funds, we simply do not have any - ever. So having managed to come to grips with sitting still, and embracing the challenge of 'faith' giving, we made the pledge and continued to pray.

"I was very aware of God at work in my life in many arenas, and although one of these was having beneficial financial consequences it was not going to lead to \$5,000 in the stipulated time frame. At that time, although we had pledged an initial lump sum, which we did not have, the a recent salary increase made it look like the pledge would need to be spread over the coming year. We were satisfied with that; in fact we were amazed. But God had yet another surprise in store.

"My new contract commenced late in the 2002/3 financial year and the reasonable expectation was, if all went well, I would be in line for my first ever bonus soon after the close of the following financial year - at least fifteen months away. But God had other things in mind. Out of the blue, my boss advised me in early July 2003 that he had included me in the bonus

pool for the year just closed, even though there was no obligation for him to do so, and subject to approval by his superiors, I would be receiving my first bonus one year earlier than expected. This was what happened. But even more amazingly, the amount received was greater than our pledge - even after tax. It is an adventure - currently a very exciting one. Praise the Lord!!!"

"With youth, it was a classic case of the shoe telling the foot how big it can grow. Through foundations, we were able to purchase The Bridge, and our youth group has grown. Everyone who has given, believed, and stepped out in faith in giving, will have many Hornsby youth come up to them in heaven, thanking them for believing in God's vision enough to step out and support Foundations, which gave them the opportunity to make a decision to follow Christ. But CCH!, the job ain't done yet! Hornsby still needs reaching, so keep pressing on and see God's victory! We were made for this purpose."

"This year, I'm on long service leave at half pay. But Hazel and I have been able to meet all our Foundations pledges early. Not only that, but God has made extra finances available to cover the cost so far of two OS mission trips for me and one for Hazel."

"In the lead up to Foundations a bit over three years ago, I prayed about a bad debt my business had for a job I had done in Western Australia a few years before. The company had gone into liquidation and I was hoping that we might eventually get back at least some return from the liquidator. For me it was a bit of a question to God about what he might do in relation to Foundations - I told him it would be great to get something from that source to help kickstart our initial gift to Foundations. That very week I received a letter from the liquidator advising that he was now in a position to pay the amount in full and attaching a cheque for \$28,000. Both the immediacy of the answer and the unexpected size of the cheque made it clear to us that God was emphatically in this. While our giving started with that 'miracle', it has been a joy to trust God over the past three years and to see how we have been able to keep to the commitment he challenged us to make. The experience has reinforced to us the principle that, if your heart is to give, God will help you to fulfil that desire (even if it involves some sacrifice along the way)."

"God's always blessed us financially, whether through his stretching our cash or our own ways of living cheaply (apart from our addiction to travel!), and has continued to do so since our stronger commitment to tithing, missions, Foundations etc. Even our flat was a huge blessing - bought after Foundations started, and cheaper than the asking price, and we still have cash in the offset."

"The last few years have been a real faith adventure for us as a family. Since committing ourselves to financially supporting the purchase and refurbishment of the Bridge, we've had a lot of changes. I have left full-time employment and launched out in my own graphic design business.

Caroline has been blessed with a part-time position at a preschool, and our children are now all at school (even High School... Aargh!).

"Praise God, by His grace, every year in May we have been able to celebrate His goodness and provision over the previous year, and keep up with the goal God laid on our hearts back in May 2003. It has been a real faith adventure - being often difficult to keep contributing the amount that we'd pledged, but if it was easy then it wouldn't require Faith now, would it?"

"One of the things that Carla and I appreciated about the whole Foundations program was the sensitive and considerate way in which it was presented. We didn't feel under any pressure to give - in fact, we didn't sense it as primarily a money thing at all, rather about going ahead with God. It was exciting to look forward to what God was going to do, it's faith building to look back now and see what God has done, and it's fun to anticipate what might be next!"

When Mr Miller announced Foundations for the Future, I knew that God was speaking to me and wanting me to be part of it. Just before this was announced, an elderly neighbour gave me a job. It was to take out the rubbish for her every week. From this job I was getting \$2 a bin which usually meant that I got \$2 a week; sometimes \$4.

I really wanted to give money to Foundations. I wanted to make a difference. I decided to give \$4 a week so I had to give money from my pocket money to make up the difference on the weeks when I only got \$2 (I was 13 at the time and getting \$5 pocket money a week so I realised that I afford this commitment). I worked out that in the whole three years I would contribute \$624. This was such an encouragement to me.

Isn't it amazing how God works? I was praying about it and told Him that all the money that I got from taking the bins out would be His money. Soon after, my neighbour got another neighbour to join in. Now days I regularly take out 5 bins every week which means God has enabled me to see a lot more go into Foundations than I expected. I've learnt that this is what happens when you're willing to do God's work.

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\*\*\*\*\* Include the giving chart in this issue \*\*\*\*\*  
as per the back of the Commitment Card

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## A Personal message from Pastor Ian

We're only one week out from what will become a Milestone Marker for CCH. It's important to set specific times aside, where we focus our energies together to achieve great steps forward in the growth of our church. We believe that the local church is God's number one plan for the outworking of his dreams throughout our world. We don't believe it's a safe, cosy club for religious observance. It has a dynamic, faith-filled, powerful life of its own, and brings positive, powerful change to people's lives, relationships, communities, and future.

Our Foundations emphasis is coming to its climax. For us, it's never about dollars. It's always about using our material wealth as an investment into the eternity of our friends and world. Next week, bring your Commitment Cards along with your upfront extravagant Cash Offering. You wait till you see what we've got planned for the day!!! You won't want to miss it!

Pastor Ian

## How to know what God wants me to give

The most important decision you or your family will make during our *Foundations* project will be the decision about your own contribution. It's not our way to manipulate or pressure people to give, or to make them feel guilty if they don't. At this time, though, a lot of us are working out what it is that God's asking them specifically to give over the next three years.

Read Mark 12:41-44. There you'll find the account of Jesus watching people as they brought their cash offerings to the Temple. Some gave out of their surplus funds. The passage seems to cast them in a negative light, but that's not what Jesus was intending. It's not wrong to give out of the overflow of your income. At the same time, though, these gifts didn't elicit the response that he gave to the widow's gift. The first type of gift was given by answering the question, "What can I afford?" The widow's gift was given by answering the question, "What sort of gift best reflects my love and faith?" Both gifts are acts of worship, but one obviously touches the heart of God more than the other. Jesus drew attention to the widow's giving because that is the type of giving he wants us to emulate.

This is very helpful, though, to be honest, it's also very challenging. It's helpful in that it teaches us that even if we don't have as much as others,

God is still interested in our faith-filled giving. The widow may well have given the smallest amount, but it was given with the greatest sacrificial heart. We often say that it's not about giving equal gifts, but making equal sacrifices. And for people who are committed to regularly giving, this is a stirring challenge. Perhaps that's why there are so many positive promises in the Bible that encourage us to give sacrificially, and regularly. People give in faith, even more than they think they can, yet somehow, God ensures that no one misses out. That's the testimony of so many people here at CCH.

"Lord, what do you want to give through me?" This kind of honest prayer brings faith into the equation, making it a more meaningful act of worship.

1. Begin by praying every day, "Lord, I *want* to give sacrificially. Please show me *how* to give a gift that will stretch my faith." If you're married, pray together with your spouse.
2. Give yourself time! Don't rush your decision. It's not a matter of putting down the first amount that pops into your head.
3. Discuss ways to give as a family. Involve your kids. Help them through their own process that they are doing with Kids Central. It's a great opportunity to teach them the joy of giving in faith.
4. Read God's promises to you. Memorise some of them, or write them out and place in a prominent place in your home: Proverbs 3:9-10; Proverbs 11:24-25; Luke 6:38; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8:1-12; 2 Corinthians 9:6-12; Matthew 6:19-20
5. Ask yourself these questions...  
Regarding your cash gift:  
*How much cash could we put together by May 28?*  
*Is there anything we could sell or convert to cash?*  
*Can we increase our short term income?*  
*Can we decrease our short term expenses?*  
Regarding our 36 month commitment:  
*Can we decrease our long term expenses?*  
*Can we increase our long term income?*  
Talk through, as a family, what you believe Jesus is saying to you. Decide as a family the total amount you'll give. Pray together.

"Father, this is a big step for us. Thank you for all you have given us. We know we wouldn't have anything if it wasn't for you. We want to be cheerful givers. We're claiming the promises you've said in your Word that you'll take care of our needs if we trust you. So, thank you for this opportunity to give and to grow. Thank you for our church. Help us reach the goal you've set before us. May your name be praised through this time in Jesus' name. Amen"

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Q: Will I be able to change my 36 month commitment if I need or want to?

A: Of course you can! We don't want our giving to become legalism. Circumstances change. At any time during the next 36 months, just speak to Shane Merrick if you need to alter your commitment.

Q: When and how do I make my commitment?

A: On Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> May, at either of our morning or evening services. In each service we will have a special time where we give both our cash offering and our 3 year pledges. Remember, these gifts are over and above our regular weekly giving. On your Commitment Card, there will be space for you to record how much you are putting in with your upfront cash offering, as well as the ongoing nature of your commitments. If for some reason, you can't make it along to the May 28 Services, you can give your gifts early to Shane Merrick, or place them in a clearly marked envelope on your first Sunday back.

Q: How will I designate my Foundations commitment each week?

A: New offering envelopes have been printed with separate designations where you can indicate what part of your weekly offering is going toward your Foundations pledge and what part is your regular offering.

Q: Can each member of our family make a separate commitment?

A: Yes! Three years ago, we had young people sign their own commitment cards. Extra cards are available at the back of the church.

Q: What kind of reactions do you expect from people?

A: We began this venture knowing there would be three different reactions: First, there are those who are already committed to giving, and do so sacrificially whenever they are asked. Second, there are some who haven't discovered the spiritual joy that comes with giving yet. That's OK. We're all at different places. Third, there are those who will want to give when they catch the vision of what we're on about. They'll want to be a part of what God is doing.

Q: How will the money we raise be used?

A: The building fund is kept separate from the general ministry funds. All Foundations gifts will be used to pay the expenses of building facilities. It is important to remember that our Foundations gifts are over and above our regular giving for the ongoing operation of our church. Otherwise our day-to-day ministries would suffer, which would be the complete opposite of what we want to achieve.

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## Foundations for God's Purposes

Since its inception, Community Church has been a church committed to outworking Jesus' purposes. Jesus captured the essence of his purpose for us when he said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself."

*We intentionally pursue Jesus' purposes by our commitment to five inspiring words - Belonging, Celebrating, Growing, Serving, and Influencing. These words express Jesus' heart for his church in fellowship, worship, discipleship, ministry, and evangelism. They form the backbone to the structure of our church and the ministries we are committed to.*

### Foundations - Belonging

Community Church is about people, because people matter to God. That's why one of our driving purposes is to ensure that our church is like a family to all who are a part of it.

"You are a member of God's very own family and you belong in God's household..." Ephesians 2:19

### Foundations - Celebrating

Community Church is Jesus' idea. We give ourselves enthusiastically to celebrate the relationship with God that we have discovered through Jesus. For us, there is no better life than the life that is lived for him.

"Celebrate the Lord all day, every day. Revel in him!" Philippians 4:4

### Foundations - Growing

Taking responsibility for our lives is very important to us. Our aim is for all those who belong to Community Church to be people who are personally maturing in their understanding of God and what he wants for their lives.

"God wants us to grow up, to know the whole truth and tell it in love - like Christ in everything." Ephesians 4:15

### **Foundations - Serving**

Best is better. By pursuing excellence with heart, we are committed to discovering and developing our individual gifts, and using them in cheerful service to others.

"In this way we are like the various parts of a human body... So since we find ourselves fashioned into all these excellently formed and marvellously functioning parts in Christ's body, let's just go ahead and be what we were made to be." Romans 12:4-6

### **Foundations - Influencing**

Jesus loves all people. We have come to experience that love and have found that it's too good to keep to ourselves. At Community Church, we are dedicated to helping all people have a personal, life-changing encounter with Jesus Christ.

"Be ready to speak up and tell anyone who asks why you're living the way you are, and always with the utmost courtesy." 1 Peter 3:16

## **A Personal message from Pastor Ian**

Recently I was asked to speak at a conference about raising finances to facilitate exciting Kingdom building programmes. It was a terrific opportunity. One of my main points is perhaps counterintuitive. It's not about finances at all. It's about releasing ministry. It's about more people being set free by the power of the Gospel. And those people have names and faces - they're our friends, families, neighbours, workmates, and study mates.

God is certainly interested in us funding our building programmes, and missions ventures, and ongoing budget. But that's because people really matter to him. He wants us to prioritise our finances so we can realise all the ministry that Jesus wants to do through us.

Over the years, I've come to discover that people are always inspired to give to visionary faith enterprises. That's what we're on about at CCH. We live in a spiritually desperate corner of our world, and we mean to make a difference. What a privilege it is to be inspired by our Foundations programme, releasing our funds directly into seeing Jesus bring his light to bear in Hornsby and its districts - and even beyond, to the far reaches of the world.

This is an historic day. And you and I get to be a part of it. It doesn't get much better than that!!!!!!

Pastor Ian