



HIS STORY

OUR STORY

## HIS STORY OUR STORY

2014 – EDITION 02

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Dear City on a Hill,

There was once a large, wealthy, and self-confident international city. It stood at the cutting edge of culture, assured of its power and its place in history. Yet this city had no time for God. Preoccupied with its pleasures, its power, and its prosperity, it was deaf to the call of the loving God – a call to repent and be saved.

This city is Nineveh. More than 2700 years ago God took pity on this great but lost city. He sent Jonah to preach a powerful message of grace and salvation – and Nineveh repented! A dark and dying city was saved, transformed, and filled with the light and life of God.

The arm of the Lord was not too short to save Nineveh, and just as it was true in the times of Jonah, it is true for us today.

As we gather and celebrate City on a Hill's seventh year, we worship the God who so loved the world that He sent and gave His one and only Son, so that whoever believes in Him shall have eternal life.

We look back in wonder and awe at God's great grace to us in the past 12 months, and we look forward in humble and expectant faith to what He will do in the next 12 months.

In this booklet you will read about what God has been doing in our midst through the Five Flags of our movement. You will be inspired by the Jesus-centred vision for the years ahead. You will hear of the practical ways in which we seek to achieve this step by step in our cities, and you will find a personal invitation to be a part of the next chapter of the story.

As one of the lead pastors at City on a Hill I want to thank you for being a part of His story and for being part of our story. This is our time. This is our opportunity. These are our cities. This is our God.

Is anything too hard for him? So read on, and may the God who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, win all the glory.

The banner at the centre of City on a Hill's life and vision and raised above all else can be summed up in this way;

***“Know Jesus and Make Jesus Known”***

We not only want City on a Hill to be famous for being all about Jesus, we want the person and work of Jesus to be famous in our city. This fame begins in our own lives, and extends into our homes, workplaces, universities, and city.

Jesus' fame is not like any other. You can't add to it; you can't take from it. He is who He is – the light of the world (John 8:12). Some will receive Jesus, others will sadly reject Him (John 1:11). We want Jesus to be received with repentance, celebration, and worship (John 20:28). He is the supreme and sovereign king (Colossians 1).

We believe this vision is biblical, timely, vital, and in God's strength, achievable.

With the banner of knowing Jesus and making Jesus known raised high, we seek to establish an additional Five Flags in the ground. These flags represent our key priorities. We want these flags to stand tall and be recognised from up close and from afar.

In the following you will read a snapshot of the many evidences of God's grace at City on a Hill not only in the spectacular, but also, and probably more often, in the ordinary. We are ordinary people, yet we are serving an extraordinary God who is at work in our lives and cities!

Let's pray that City on a Hill would continue to be known by these five priorities, that we would celebrate the many evidences of God's grace, for the good of all people and the glory of God.

## 4 FLAG ONE



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BY DAVE MIERS ▼

## BIBLICAL TEACHING & TRAINING

Jesus is our teacher. His words are the words of eternal life (John 6). Faith comes from hearing His word (Romans 10:17). We are transformed by the renewing of our mind (Romans 12:2).

Our recognition of biblical teaching and training will be evident in our unashamed declaration of the whole counsel of God in and through our Sunday services, online media, Community Groups, song writing, courses, and conferences. We not only seek to connect people to Christ, but deepen their knowledge of and trust in Christ. We want to equip people for engagement in the world.

During the last 12 months Jesus has been teaching City on a Hill significant things through His word. Leading up to Christmas, we considered Jesus' **Promises** and how to take hold of these precious words, and we began the new year in the Psalms – **The Songs of Summer II**, reminded once again that the Lord is good.

**The King's Queen** – our study in the Old Testament book of Esther – was a wonderful series where we discovered the powerful work of God in the mundane, the ordinary, and the unseen.

**We Are** – our Ephesians series – was an important time for us as we considered our identity as the church. We were captured by God's purposes that find their culmination in Christ. This teaching continues to have an impact on our everyday lives and relationships.

We have recently begun an apologetic series – **God vs The World**. In it we have been considering some of the objections against Christianity. There has been great engagement within our community, as people have brought friends to church and participated through live and off-the-cuff SMS questions.

As well as being taught the Bible faithfully from our Pastors at Melbourne, Geelong, and West, we have had the opportunity to hear up-and-coming preachers through our PlantED Intern program. In August we also had the privilege of hosting **Leading on the Frontlines** in partnership with Acts 29. This was a significant time of input for our church through the teaching of **Matt Chandler, Leonce Crump, Steve Timmis, and Guy Mason**. Matt Chandler and Leonce Crump also joined us in church with a timely word for us in season.

During the year **City Kids Melbourne** reached a significant milestone as they completed a two-year overview of the Old Testament. This was beneficial for our teachers as they grappled with the text to teach it faithfully, and beneficial for families as they considered the unfolding storyline of salvation. According to one teacher, the highlight of the series was seeing how

***“the Old Testament keeps pointing forward to Jesus.”***

City Kids have now begun a detailed study of the New Testament.

By God's grace, Jim Davison has been able to present a short 5-10 minute gospel message each Saturday at our **Many Rooms Kitchen** in North Melbourne. Jim has been adapting the themes from our Sunday preaching series to prepare his short talks.

Churches are accessing our teaching material, artwork, and bible readings all across Australia. Our City on a Hill Melbourne **Podcast** continues to grow with an average of 1800 downloads per week. We have also begun a weekly City on a Hill Geelong and City on a Hill West podcast.

In an exciting new development we have begun **filming our sermons** each week in Melbourne. As well as sharing this teaching online, these videos have been played in West and Geelong once every month. This has helped to provide unity as one church across our three sites.

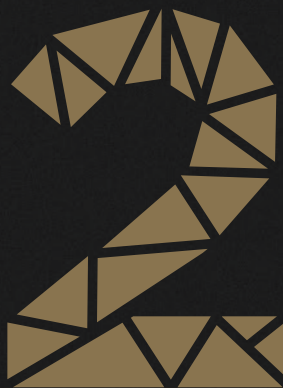






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## FLAG TWO



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BY DAVE MIERS ▼

## HUMBLE, COURAGEOUS, & SACRIFICIAL LEADERSHIP

Jesus is a leader. He is the Senior Pastor of our church. We want to be led by Jesus, lead like Jesus, and lead others to Jesus. We will train men and women for leadership in the home, workplace, university, and church.

We will stand with other leaders in the body of Christ and offer support, energy, and encouragement. City on a Hill will model to the wider city a different and counter-cultural city. Within the city of man, we will shine as a city of God. We will model a gospel-centred life in the areas of marriage, sexuality, finance, community, justice, and truth.

The last year has seen a greater complexity in how we organise our leadership with the planting of two new sites in Geelong and West. Much work has been done to reflect this in how we organise leadership at a site level and leadership at a movement level. This has been communicated with greater clarity on our organisation chart.

There are now more than 220 leaders across City on a Hill. This is an increase of more than 50 during the last 12 months. Praise God for raising up more and more Godly leaders! We have been blessed two times during the year at all-in **Leaders Days**. These have been inspiring as all our teams have come together, and very practical in equipping us to be better leaders.

As well as our growing staff team we are also served faithfully by our Wardens: Ryan, Craig, and Jonathan. We have continued to invest in the next generation of leadership through our PlantED Interns (Jarred and Kai) as well as our dedicated Engage Interns (Jess, Vicky, Georgia, Jeremy, Mark, Karl, Maz, and Halla).

All hands were on deck in August as our team ran the first **Acts 29 National Conference**. Acts 29 Australia is a network seeking to plant church-planting churches, but this conference had broad appeal as the 600 leaders present were all encouraged to be leaders in the mission of making Jesus known. With exceptional teaching on stage and in breakout sessions, one person described the event as;

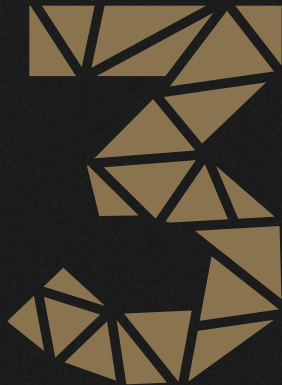
***“the best Christian conference I have been to for a decade!”***

The final example of humble, courageous, and sacrificial leadership comes from our **Creative Team**. After months of hard work, the team, led by Dom Macaluso and David Martel, released a new EP called ‘Covered’. Peaking at number 5 in the Inspirational charts in iTunes, this recording includes some impressive arrangements of old and new hymns.









## COMMUNITIES OF LIFE, LOVE, & MISSION

God Himself is by nature in community (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). We who are made in His image therefore reflect His glory by living in community, just as the Lord instructed Adam – “it is not good for man to be alone” (Genesis 2).

City on a Hill seeks to not only grow in size and influence, but also in closeness and connection.

We want to see new and current people welcomed into our midweek Community Groups that exist to serve a neighbourhood or network. These communities will be known for the life they enjoy, authenticity they embrace, the love they show, and the mission they share.

Our Community Groups are one of the central ways that we seek to live out the third flag. As our Sunday gatherings continue to grow in size it is important that we continue to meet in smaller groups to share life, love, and mission. We have three different types of groups across City on a Hill; neighbourhood, network, and youth.

In God's kindness He continues to add more Community Groups across all three sites. **West** already has 11 groups, with 3 more planned to start in the next few months. **Geelong** began the year with 4 groups, has grown to 7 groups, and are about to launch 2 more groups. **Melbourne** has 50 groups, with a number also getting ready to start soon. That means we have 68 groups – 28 more than we had this time last year. Praise God for the growth!

With so many groups and more in the pipeline it is important to keep training up more leaders. We are building an apprenticeship model and also appointing coaches to oversee huddles of groups.

Since the introduction of breakfast at the **Many Rooms' Kitchen**, there has been much more happening in the way of community building in between breakfast and lunch. There have also been increased opportunities for Christians to share Jesus in this time too.

Another way we have been able to continue building community is through a new initiative called **City Vision**. These regional events have seen clusters of Community Groups come together for fellowship, prayer, an update on church vision, and a town-hall style interaction with pastors.

Each week we hear many stories from Community Groups and how God is helping them to grow in their love for one another and the local community.











## GOSPEL GROWTH

Jesus is on mission to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). We want to follow Him.

Our commitment to gospel growth will be evident in the language we use, the lives we live, the services we run, the prayers we pray, the leaders we hire, the churches we plant, the missionaries we send, the songs we sing, the courses we host, the organisations we partner with, and the companies we build.

In the last 12 months we have planted two City on a Hill churches and sent out one independent church. **City on a Hill Geelong** launched in November 2013 and meets at Simonds Stadium, the spiritual heart of Geelong. **City on a Hill West** launched in April 2014 and meets in the middle of the western suburbs at Hoyts Highpoint. **Redemption Church**, an independent church, was launched in March 2014 in a pub in Ringwood.

We have seen **significant gospel growth** across our three City on a Hill sites as God's grace is shared and Jesus is proclaimed. Geelong is now averaging just over 110 people per week. West are averaging 140 people per week. And Melbourne is now averaging almost 800 people per week.

That means across all sites we are averaging over 1000 people per week with a community size of almost 1300 people. We've grown by 29% in the last 12 months alone, 66% in the last 24 months, and an enormous 136% in the last 36 months! *(See Figure 1)*

Pastor Dave Miers has recently joined the staff team with a view to being trained for further City on a Hill church planting.

During the last 12 months we have had 40 people go through our **Introducing Jesus** course. Our content continues to be improved and other churches are starting to use the content too. There have been many great conversations as people have been captured by the man, the mission, and the message of Jesus. A number have put their trust in Jesus!

In August more than 20 churches came together for an extraordinary event at Hamer Hall Melbourne – **Something Bigger**. Pastor Matt Chandler urged the 1700 people present to live for something bigger than the mundane of this world. By God's grace, upwards of 50 people from across our city responded to the gospel invitation to put their trust in Christ.

At City on a Hill we love to celebrate the new life that believers have through union with Christ. One tangible way to celebrate is as new believers are **baptised into the faith**. During the past twelve months we have seen 41 people get baptised and God-willing we will celebrate many more at our seventh birthday celebrations.

**City Youth** are seeking to know Jesus and make Jesus known among teenagers across our city. We do this through community groups and weekend events. The highest attendance this year was 71 at one of our special events. We are in the process of moving into the new library at Docklands. This permanent home is a state-of-the-art facility well-suited to our needs.

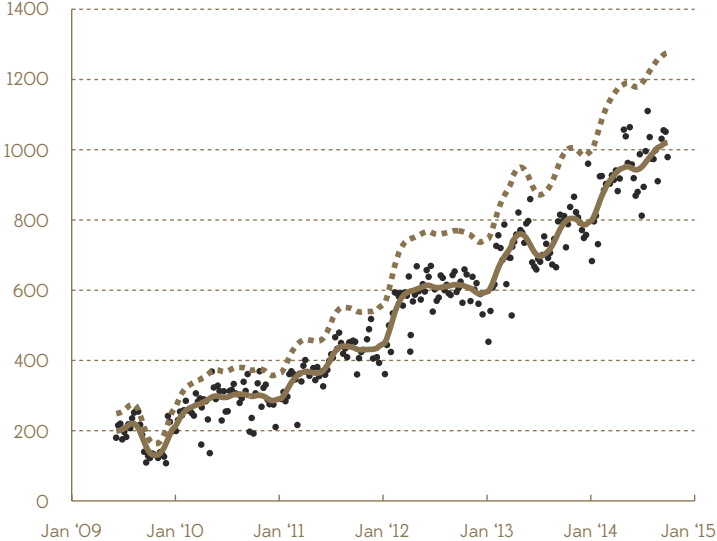
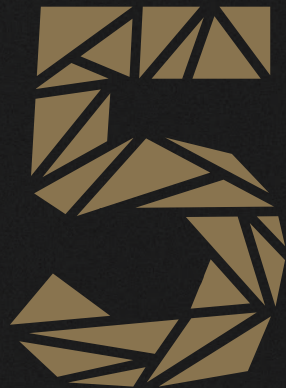


FIGURE 1 - GROWTH AT ALL SITES & MEETINGS







## GOD-CENTRED GENEROSITY

The generosity of God is displayed perfectly in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. His generosity is costly, indiscriminate, selfless, and abundant.

City on a Hill seeks to mirror the generosity of Christ. Our generosity will be evident in our engagement with our city's poor, marginalised and oppressed, the wider body of Christ, and the care shown towards each member of our church. Our generosity will reach the young, old, married, and single, and meet them in their intellectual, financial, relational, spiritual, physical, and emotional needs.

Many Rooms continues to be an obvious way to demonstrate God-centred generosity to our city. This year we have served more than 5000 meals. Our partnership with **City of Melbourne** continues to grow. They recently awarded Many Rooms a grant of \$120,000 to support our work over the next two years. This will enable us to continue to expand. God-willing we will open a second room on Friday nights in the city, beginning next year.

Geelong and West are both seeking opportunities outside of the city to show kindness to people in need. In **Geelong** we now have teams working with homeless men and refugees. We have also been able to begin a much-needed and well-received breakfast program in Geelong High School. In a great answer to prayer, **West** have been able to connect people battling with drug addiction and those at-risk of homelessness into the church community.

Another way we seek to show God-centred generosity is by **giving away media** content. As well as our sermon podcast our website has received 180,000+ page views from 153 countries. One podcast listener commented;

***“I live in Canberra but I’ve been praying and following your growth - and what a story, God is incredible!”***

We have had City on a Hill-related content featured on The Resurgence, Eternity News, Fervr, Communicate Jesus, Church

Marketing Sucks, and Case Magazine. There were 200 copies of “Covered” – our new EP from the creative team – also generously given away.

We are seeking to be generous in the coaching and training we are offering to other churches, supporting church plants like Redemption. At an organizational level we have allocated significant time and money to the Acts 29 Networks and the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne.

The proceeds of the citywide event, Something Bigger, were given to a local charity. That resulted in close to \$28,000 raised for The Babes Project – which is helping women facing a crisis pregnancy.

Compassion Australia was one of the major partners of Something Bigger and Leading on the Frontlines. This gave people an opportunity to hear of the work that they are doing to release children from poverty in Jesus’ name. Many individuals and Community Groups have since begun **sponsoring children**.







In the past seven years we have seen a unique story of God's grace unfold before our eyes. We can thank Jesus for the hundreds of men and women who have received His life for the very first time, for the new and continuing ministries of City on a Hill, and for the relationships formed and the journey we share.

The work of the gospel not only fills us with gratitude but fuel for the journey ahead. We are inspired by the Spirit to move forward with bold and audacious steps in our mission to Know Jesus and Make Jesus Known. No matter how far we gaze into the future, Jesus continues to be central and supreme over all else. Supporting our central banner is the ongoing commitment and passion to our Five Flags - biblical teaching and training; humble, courageous, and sacrificial leadership; communities of life, love, and mission; gospel growth; and God-centred generosity.

Since the launch of "City Steps" in 2012, we have not only realised many of our goals, but our church has matured and taken new

shape. Twelve months ago we were one church meeting in a single location, now we stand as a movement of men and women gathering across two cities, in three locations, hosting five Sunday services. This move has not only strengthened our community, but extended the horizons of what can be accomplished with and for our great God.

In time spent praying, and listening to you - the body of City on a Hill, and in discussion with the church's leaders, we have identified three core priorities that paint an exciting picture of the future, but also navigate the course ahead. For the fame of Jesus we will:

***"Raise up gospel-hearted leaders,  
to plant healthy churches,  
that will serve cities."***

## GOSPEL-HEARTED LEADERS

Leadership has always been of supreme importance in God's story. Jesus invested in leaders who were empowered to serve sacrificially as they cared for His Church in word and deed. For this reason we will place a very high importance on gathering, assessing, developing, and deploying Christian leaders who will lead churches with humility, sacrifice, and courage.

This is a call for more than a lead pastor, but a team of leaders who can use their complimentary gifts and talents for the good of all people and the glory of God.

Initiatives such as PlantED, Engage, The School of Ministry, Community Group training, and our Coaches Network will be some of the key avenues we develop in an effort to disciple our future leaders.

## HEALTHY CHURCHES

An outworking of our training and development will be the planting of healthy churches. We prioritise church planting as the most faithful and fruitful response to Christ's Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20). We want our church not only to expand in size, but to grow in spiritual fruit.

One of the exciting goals we have to assist our health and maturity is the introduction of church membership. Through a series of interactive training seminars and personal engagement we will provide in-depth teaching on key areas of discipleship (what it means to grow as a believer), ecclesiology (the identity and governance of the church), missiology (our purpose in the world), and doxology (our invitation to worship). Alongside this we want to take time to explore the core values of City on a Hill and the vision God has set before us. In membership we see an increased commitment to mutual care and commitment that is for the health and blessing of all.

## SERVING CITIES

Our identity and story is richly tied to the city. From our beginnings in a pub in the heart of the new Docklands precinct, City on a Hill has been moved by an unusual but timely calling in the present season of God's Kingdom.

Cities are uniquely characterized by density, but also social, cultural, and economic diversity. Because God loves people and His gospel is good news for all people, cities are a wonderful focus for mission. Our prayerful desire is to be a light in the public square and to serve our cities with unconditional love and radical generosity.

Together we see a movement of hundreds of gospel-hearted leaders, planting scores of healthy churches to serve multiple cities across Australia and around the world.

In the ensuing months we will develop these goals further and provide plenty of opportunity for your input, strategic advice, prayers, and involvement. City on a Hill is a story of God's unending grace which is only told through your service and generosity.

In light of that I'd like to thank you for your part in God's story. Under God it is your commitment, creativity, generosity, and service that enable the light of this church to shine!

I'd like to invite you to continue to step out in faith with us. My prayer is that the grace of God and the urgency of these days would inspire you to pray constantly, serve faithfully, lead courageously, and give generously. These are important days and every moment must be lived in light of eternity. May we seize every moment and pour ourselves out in joy, knowing that our God is good and His gospel is powerful to save.





During the last 12 months the City on a Hill leadership and staff have undertaken a significant and highly challenging project to articulate City on a Hill from a large, single-site, 'Melbourne-centric' entity to a truly multi-site movement.

The 'movement project' has required enormous changes in our staffing structures, organisational charts, meeting and decision-making structures, financial systems, operational settings, website, communications, and community groups. Indeed, there are few places that have not been affected by this project.

Once again City on a Hill has grown up! The Operations Team has been excited to assist with much of the structural and systems heavy-lifting. We feel confident that the operational back-end is now in a much better place to support City on a Hill's new scale and scope as a unified movement for Jesus. Crucially, the new structures will facilitate any future expansion without major further renovation. Operationally, we're ready for God's next step for us!

#### FINANCES 2013/14

Financially, City on a Hill has continued to be blessed by the generosity of its people. Consolidated giving income across the sites was a little lower (-9%) than budgeted (\$1.317 million vs. \$1.438 million), which was absorbed on the expenditure side by delaying some staffing appointments and creating savings in ministry expenditure. *(See Figure 2)*

Nonetheless, within 2013/14 we were able to make the much-needed move to the larger Cinema 11 at Hoyts Melbourne Central, bring on several senior staff and expand other roles, and to deliver several significant projects such as the audio-visual upgrade project at the Melbourne site, the timely video preaching project that will bless the whole movement (and beyond), and the launch of City on a Hill West. As strategic expansion projects these were funded by the Kingdom Fund as forecast in the 2013/14 budget.



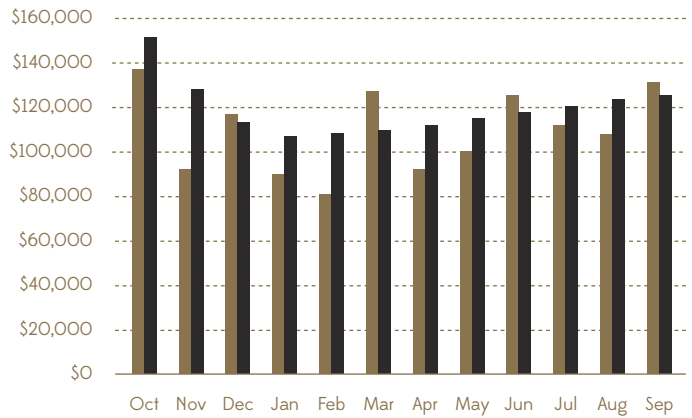


FIGURE 2 - CONSOLIDATED GIVING 2013/14

### BUDGET 2014/15

Befitting our new movement and multi-site stance, the 2014/15 Budget reflects our new structure with clarity, transparency, and scalability. (See Figure 3) For the first time, each site is represented clearly, including the new 'movement' site, to facilitate budgeting, reporting, and stewardship at the site-level.

Further, the budget makes an important distinction between operating expenditure towards our committed activities and those projects and ministries which are expansionary in nature. This distinction helps each Site Pastor and the Movement as a whole to see more clearly what financial sustainability looks like, and what would be needed to build more capacity, tools, and people.

Significantly, our new financial and operational structure allows us to see with great clarity the needs we have that will fuel our bold church planting vision: to identify, assess, train, and deploy Church planters and church planting teams, to launch new City on a Hill sites, to support independent church planters, and to support our own church plants.

His Story Our Story 2014 sees the launch of the City on a Hill Church Planting Fund (CPF). The CPF has the sole purpose of investing in the church planting activities of City on a Hill: investing in leadership, planting and supporting healthy church plants, and reaching and serving cities with the gospel.

A more in-depth Budget 14/15 report will be available via City on a Hill Community Group leaders.

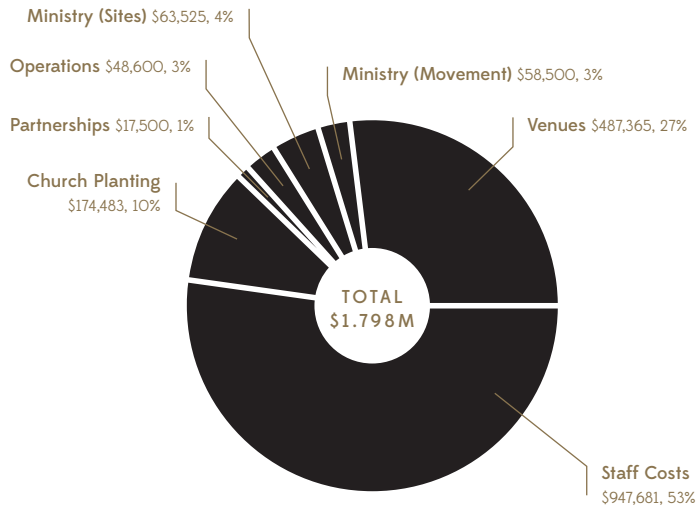


FIGURE 3 - EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN 2014/15

## YOUR PART IN THE VISION

City on a Hill's story is one of immense grace – of God's powerful movement through and amongst us, breathing into life a church of great gospel intent and passion.

In this report you will have read of the many ways that God is moving at City on a Hill. We each have been blessed by this ministry and we each have a share in serving God's continuing purposes through City on a Hill's ministry.

What a privilege to be involved in His work!

Over the next 12 months we have two crucial financial goals that we invite you to be part of:

1. First, we have made investments in venues, staff, and ministry projects to serve our existing sites in 2013/14 that will continue as full-year expenditures for 2014/15. Together, we prayerfully look to God's work through our community to grow our giving by around \$265,000 to provision our core ministries and activities. While this

is an adventurous target, we believe that as a community gathering under God's grace, it is not beyond our reach. We ask that you, perhaps with your family, consider how your regular giving will be able to contribute to this target.

2. Second, we would like to kick-off the Church Planting Fund with a sum of \$100,000. This target represents a significant investment that will build our capacity to plant again in 2016. Over the coming months we will be inviting churches and individuals outside of City on a Hill to consider partnering with our church planting vision. We'd love to be able to tell these friends of the commitment we – as those who have already experienced the work of God through City on a Hill church plants – have made to kick-starting the next phase of City on a Hill's Church Planting by reaching our CPF target.

You and your family can act on these twin goals online by heading to [cityonahill.com.au/hisstoryourstory](http://cityonahill.com.au/hisstoryourstory)

## 32 SERVING TOGETHER

### WHY WE SERVE TOGETHER

When addressing the church in Ephesus regarding how they are to treat one another, Paul calls them to “walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us” (Ephesians 5:2). The gospel produces in us a love that puts the needs of others ahead of our own, propelling us to serve with and for one another.

City on a Hill’s mission to Know Jesus and Make Jesus Known can only be achieved through the generous service of faithful people who love Jesus and love His church, and who give their lives to the disciple-making mission He has called us to.

### HOW WE CAN BE SERVING TOGETHER

There are many opportunities to serve and give of your time and talents in all different areas of City on a Hill. Some of the opportunities that exist include being part of one of our Sunday Service teams, becoming a volunteer or leader in City Kids or City

Youth, engaging with the homeless and disadvantaged at Many Rooms, serving behind the scenes on our Operations team, or utilizing your creative gifts in the Communications or Music teams.

### INVITATION TO BE A PART OF THE STORY

The Bible tells us that every person is critical to the body of Christ – each person is needed for the church to fulfil the mission that Jesus has called us to.

This is an invitation to be part of the story. I invite you to prayerfully consider how you can serve Jesus and serve like Jesus – to be on mission with us as we seek to know Jesus and make Jesus known. Sign up online at [cityonahill.com.au/connect](http://cityonahill.com.au/connect)



**CITY**  

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**ON A HILL**