



SWOT REPORT

Message from Geoff Pittuck

Greetings Praying Friends,

As we come slowly to the end of our enforced Covid-19 isolation it is good to reflect on what we have gained in this time. Some of the greatest times of spiritual growth occur when God strips away everything of the world and it is just me and Him. These seasons are not without His purpose to bring us closer to Him and mould us to be what He wants us to be, to bring us to repentance, to a greater intimacy with the Him, to a new understanding and revelation of His Word and a re-positioning of God as the greatest love in our lives. As we slowly come out of the Coronavirus isolation may we continue to fix our eyes upon Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. Though the Lord promises to remain with us, never to leave us nor forsake us, may we continue to seek Him moment by moment, hour by hour, and delight in His presence for the strength to persevere through the challenges that we may find ourselves in next in this post-lockdown season.

What is SWOT?

The **South West Outreach Team (SWOT)** is a team of Christians who travel by car to our south-west agricultural towns once or twice a week to encourage and pray with local believers. SWOT began some seven years ago when Pastor Brian Whitehurst retired from pastoring churches and was "nudged" by God to ministry in the Great Southern. SWOT's vision is to light a small fire in each of the south west towns and then to call upon the Holy Spirit to fan these flames into one large flame, engulfing the south west in the fire of revival. The vision is reflected in the Team's logo.

Ps Brian Whitehurst
SWOT Founder



PINGELLY, Thursday, 21 May, 2020

Finally, the south-west zone border in Western Australia, set up as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, was opened. On this, our first opportunity for outreach in 2020, Brian Lowndes from the Mustard Seed Community Church drove. The countryside appeared dry. A lot of dry-seeding was apparent and with the forecast of rain on the weekend, there was a hive of seeding activity occurring on many of the farms we passed. Our first meeting was with Helen Price from the Pingelly Community Church.

PINGELLY, Thursday, 21 May, 2020 (Cont'd)

After many years of driving through Pingelly on our way to and from other country towns we have finally been able to make contact with the wonderful people at the Pingelly Community Church. We look forward to many years of fellowship with these lovely Christians.

It was delightful to meet Helen for the first time. Due to our late arrival Helen had been anxious that perhaps she had gotten the meeting date wrong. Upon making our apologies for our lateness, Helen warmly welcomed us into the church building where we discovered that Helen had thoughtfully put the air-conditioner on prior to our arrival. It was warm inside and before long we were enjoying a hot coffee and some of Helen's home baked lemon cake.

It was our first visit and we had a lot of questions to ask each other. We discovered that Helen

had known families that Brian had known from their time living in the Wongan Hills area. Following a short prayer time, we were shown around the church. Our first initial meeting concluded with the obligatory photo session. Leaving Helen waving to us as we departed Pingelly it felt like we had been friends forever.



POPANYINNING, Thursday, 21 May, 2020

It is only 25 kilometres from Pingelly to Popanyinning so it seemed like no time at all before we were parking outside the General Store in Popanyinning owned by Sam and Jenny Maughan.

Both Sam and Jenny were seated outside the store talking to a customer when we arrived. It had been a long time since our last visit so we were pleased to finally be able to spend time with our dear friends over a lunch expertly made by their new employee, Tracey. Although business

was busy, both in the store and in the food van, with food orders even being taken over the phone, we were able to share a quality time together. Their new employee, Tracey, was proving to be an asset.



POPANYINNING, Thursday, 21 May, 2020 (Cont'd)

We spoke of the sad passing of our mutual friend, Pastor Bob Chapman, who was promoted to glory on 6 May, 2020, only one day before his 73rd birthday.

It was reported in an earlier SWOT report that a buyer was interested in Sam and Jenny's business. However, following advice from a solicitor and much time in prayer, Sam informed us that the buyer turned out not to be a viable contender. Subsequently, Tracey had been employed on a part-time basis to free up time for Sam and Jenny to enjoy some short holidays away in their caravan.



Among the many prayer requests offered up for Sam and Jenny at the conclusion of our time of fellowship, we prayed for their continued protection given some disturbing revelations regarding recent break-ins. We also prayed for Jenny's health, their business, guidance,

strength and wisdom.

Aware that time was ticking and we still had Gary Johnstone to visit in Narrogin, we bade our farewells to Sam and Jenny and drove the 30 kilometres to Narrogin all the while praising God for the beautiful day and the perfect weather.

NARROGIN, Thursday, 21 May, 2020

We encountered little traffic on the road and within record time we were seated in Gary Johnstone's backyard over looking his newly planted vegetable patch, sun-baking like lizards in the warmth of the afternoon sunshine.



The coronavirus isolation had proved beneficial to Gary. He had enjoyed the quality time in the Lord's presence undisturbed by visitors or worldly distractions. Gary advised us that it was only a few days prior that he had unlocked his gate to allow access for visitors.

Many of the local churches, as was the case in the city, were using the online app "Zoom" to connect with their congregation. We gleaned that few churches had the facilities or the technical knowledge to be able to record their services. It was still too early to ascertain when church services would return to "normal". Discussions ensued. What was "normal" in terms of the early New Testament church? Was the new "normal" going to be home churches?

We learnt that Gary's daughter, Margaret, had been living on a farm during the isolation period but had only recently returned to Narrogin.

NARROGIN, Thursday, 21 May, 2020 (Cont'd)

A brief time was given to deliberating over the issues of our current world situation, whereby we give thanks to God that He is ultimately in control and we have no need to fear. Eyeing up Gary's flourishing pumpkin vines we were then served with a piping hot cuppa accompanied by, you guessed it, home-made pumpkin scones. A touch of heaven. We had been soaked in good conversation, good company and warm sunshine. Our tummies were full.

Brian reminded us that the shadows were getting long. It was time to depart. In turn we prayed, making petitions for the needs of the community, a supernatural move of the Holy

Spirit across the Great Southern, for Gary and his family.

North of Wandering where the road meets Albany Highway we came across a terrible accident. A body lay under a covering on the road. Motorbike pieces were scattered everywhere. We prayed knowing that there would be loved ones who would soon be receiving very bad news. Heading hastily in the opposite direction, en route to Perth, we passed an ambulance and two police cars. A sad end to what had been for us, a most blessed day. It was dark when Brian left us in our driveway at 6.00pm.



Prayer Points

Please continue to pray for :

A great move of the Holy Spirit across the country.

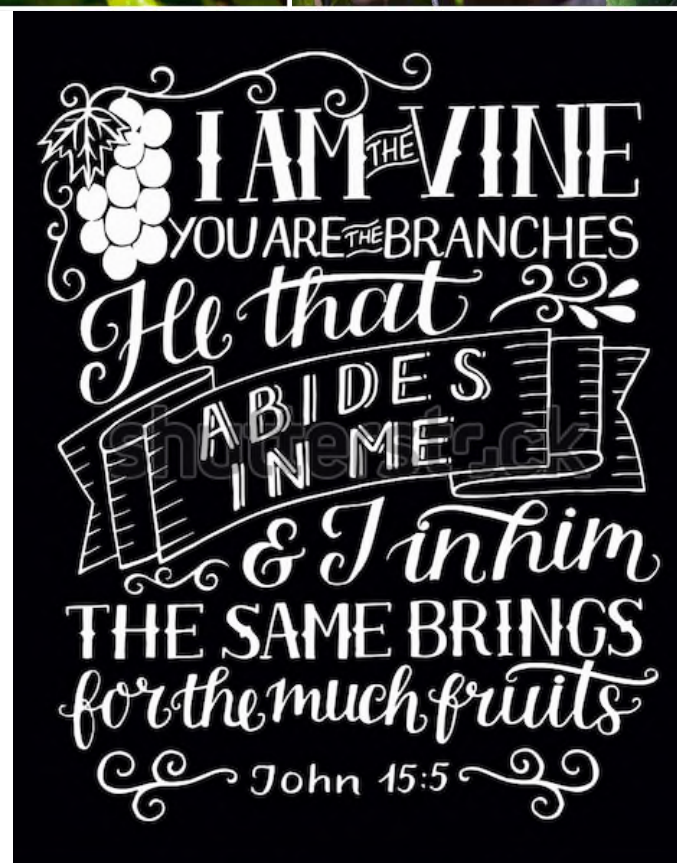
Pray that the churches would be wise and discerning how best to help and serve during the crisis, to be salt and light to the world in darkness.

Pray for church leaders to find effective ways to minister to those who aren't able to use internet technology.

Please pray that the pandemic would cause people to recognise their own mortality and their need for hope, that they would reflect, repent and turn to Christ.

Please pray for Jenny and Sam Maghan, their business, for protection both spiritually and physically, for good health and the Lord's blessings on their plans to travel in their caravan.

Pray for Margaret Johnson's health.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT a devotional

2 Chronicles 20:6 (NIV)

⁶and said: "Lord, the God of our ancestors, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you...For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."

I encourage you to read the full chapter. King Jehoshaphat learnt on waking one morning that a great army, only 25 kms away, was about to descend against the nation of Judah. It was an exceedingly mighty army. Terror and panic seized the inhabitants of Judah. King Jehoshaphat knew his troops were enormously outnumbered. He had no stratagems. Even if had, there was no time to put any strategies into effect. The king was overwhelmed. He was powerless. So, what did the king do?

The king got down on his knees and prayed an authentic prayer. "I have a crisis here Lord. We are about to face imminent annihilation. I have no ability to fix this problem. I don't know what to do. *"Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you...For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."*

God answered: *"Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battles is not yours, but God's."* 2 Chronicles 20.15 When the people heard

that, everyone fell down and worshipped the Lord. The people began to sing loud praises. Within a short time, the vast attacking army had turned against each other. The people of Israel had only to collect the spoils and celebrate victory. How glorious it is to be a child of God. Our daddy Father will always defend His children when we acknowledge Him as God. God of our fathers, God of heaven, God of power. Our problems become His problems, our battles His battles. Rather than participants, we shall be invited to be spectators: *"Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord."*

In these unprecedented times, perhaps you too are overwhelmed. Sing and make melody in your heart to the Lord. Praise God in whom all blessings flow. When we make praise, and worship our first strategy of defence, we gain victory over our fear, discouragement, worry and concern but more importantly, we gain the victory over the enemy.

God Bless

Inspired by a devotional by Joni Eareckson Tada

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