



FLAME
TREE

Family Connect

March 2019

Message from Pastor Stu

True Fasting

'Why have we fasted,' they say,
'and you have not seen it?
Why have we humbled ourselves,
and you have not noticed?' Is 58:3

It was the last day of our 3 week fast and I was feeling pretty good. I was looking forward to all the foods I had been missing: hot chips, chocolate, meat. Every time I sat at the lights at the top of Arundel Ave, the aroma of KFC filled my car, and after this day, I thought, 'I'm gonna get me some KFC next week.'

Yep, I was feeling pretty good- even, dare I say, somewhat pleased with myself for not giving in these past 3 weeks. Then my wife, Renee read a portion of Isaiah 58 out loud.

"Is this the kind of fast I have chosen,
only a day for people to humble themselves?
Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed
and for lying in sackcloth and ashes?
Is that what you call a fast,
a day acceptable to the Lord?" (v5)

Talk about a wake up call. In an instant I knew I had missed it.

Isaiah goes on:

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:
to loose the chains of injustice
and untie the cords of the yoke,
to set the oppressed free
and break every yoke?

Is it not to share your food with the hungry
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—
when you see the naked, to clothe them,
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

Then your light will break forth like the dawn,
and your healing will quickly appear;
then your righteousness will go before you,
and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.

Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;
you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I." (v6-9)

Sunday Services: 9am & 6pm

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What is the kind of sacrifice, or fast that the Lord honours? We sometimes fall into spiritualising what God has always intended to be very real and practical. 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice', Jesus said, quoting the prophet Hosea (Matt 9:13; Hosea 6:6). In both cases the word of God is warning against a religious position that disqualifies the disadvantaged.

I had a bible college lecturer that would require his students to go through their bibles and cut out every reference to the poor and hungry. Such an exercise was no small feat. There are more than 2000 Scriptures relating to poverty and justice. (<https://sojo.net/sites/default/files/2000verses.pdf>). His point was that God cares so much about the poor, and if you remove the poor from the Word of God, your bible literally falls apart. In the same way, if we remove the poor from our hearts, what happens to the Word therein also?

I believe that one of the challenges of our times is to keep the Gospel real. Gospel means good news, and good news is not just spiritual. It has meaning for the physical too. This is not to down play the miracle of salvation- a truly spiritual experience. But even salvation in the Bible was always connected to the whole of life- not just to the soul. It impacts a person's life in the area of relationships, finances, and health to name just a few.

The promise that follows the very practical aspects of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and setting the oppressed free is that "then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.

Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;
you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I."

Why? Because we will be crying out to Him about the things already on His heart. This is a timely reminder to me. To never lose sight of very real needs even as I pursue 'spiritual breakthroughs'.

As a church we give to many organisations and missions serving the poor. We have mentors in local schools ministering to children at risk. Teams go into mental health wards to minister the love of God to patients. We face numerous opportunities each day to 'loose the chains of injustice and set the oppressed free'; wonderful opportunities to see the kingdom of God expand on the earth. The question is always: Will our hearts be moved? And what then, will you do with your opportunities?

Stay hungry,
Stu

Upcoming Events



Annual General Meeting

MARCH 10TH | AFTER SUNDAY AM SERVICE



Newcomers Dessert Night

New to FlameTree Church in the last year? We would love to invite you to our Newcomers Dessert Night.

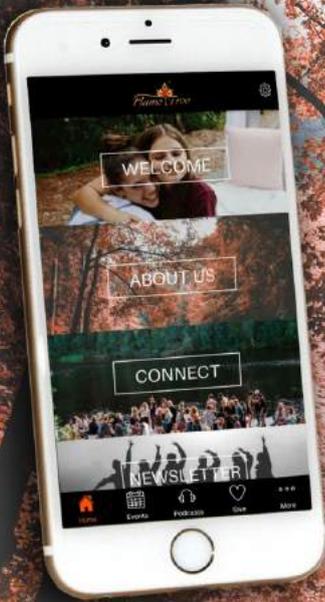
March 19th | 6pm | FlameTree

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Church News & Updates

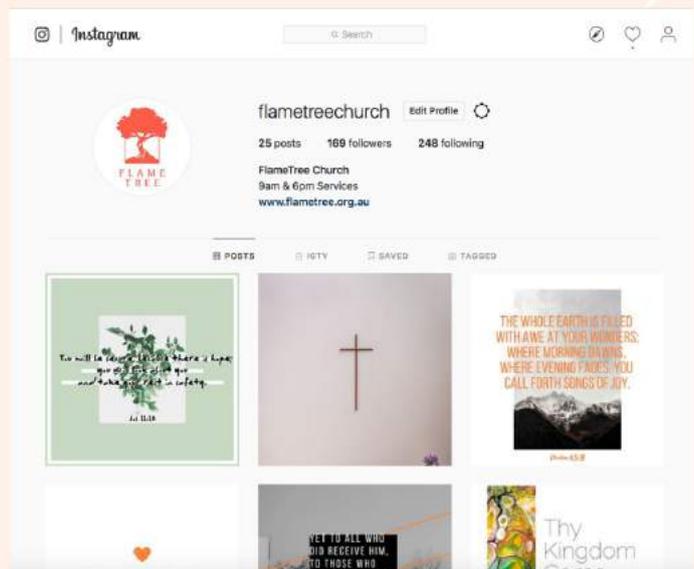
Church app is here!



- Text 'FlameTree App' to 0488 202 202
- Click on the link
- On the landing page, click the blue logo

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Church News & Updates

FLAMETREE



Taking Root Downwards
Bearing Fruit Upwards
Extending His Kingdom Outwards

NEW FLAMETREE VISION AND LOGOS

TAKING ROOT DOWNWARD

Although surrounded by enemies, God's promise to Judah in Isaiah 37:31 is that they would "again take root downward and bear fruit upward." That beautifully flourishing imagery resonated powerfully with the pastors and elders of FlameTree last Friday when we met to review our local church vision. It came as a fresh revelation at the near the end of a 3-hour conversation.

Taking root downward speaks to the core value of the Kingdom of God for every human being, that of becoming like Jesus. At FlameTree we prioritise the presence of God in all we do, knowing that everything to which we aspire as citizens of His Kingdom flows out of our relationship with Him.

BEARING FRUIT UPWARD

Being precedes doing. Jesus said, "Make a tree good and its fruit will be good" Mt.12:33. And a tree without fruit is pointless, so we press into Him and fully expect to "bear fruit upward" as a natural consequence. The health and wholeness of our relationship with each other and the larger Body of Christ authenticates and empowers our influence in the world.

EXTENDING HIS KINGDOM OUTWARD

FlameTree has always had a heart for mission, both local and global. We dream of a Nambour and Coast community so impacted by the Gospel of the Kingdom it is renown as a safe place with functional families, emptying hospitals and psych wards, successful schools, and a rolling atmosphere of revival wherever believers meet and lift up the name of Jesus! And we will continue to strengthen our commitment to the nations as God directs: Israel, Oceania, and South East Asia, until His Kingdom is complete.

OUR NEW FLAMETREE DESIGN

The new emblem for FlameTree shows the fire of God deep in the trunk and roots of the tree, a fire that continues to burn regardless of outward circumstances, and gives the rest of the tree power and purpose. Remember one of the original prophetic words that informed our name-change exactly seven years ago was that we are a "tree over the world; every time a leaf falls off the tree a fire is started; that happens all the seasons, but in the autumn all your leaves fall off and there's a fire all over the world." One day, "the

earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD" Habakkuk 2:14

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Church News & Updates



If you're on Facebook, jump on and like our page. We post weekly podcasts, scriptures, any upcoming events and different things happening in the church.

<https://www.facebook.com/FlameTreeChurch/>

Podcasts

To listen to the latest podcast sermons, log onto

www.flametree.org.au/podcasts

OR download our church app!



Paying Tithes / Donations Online

If you would like to pay your tithes online via bank deposit, here are the bank details. Please make sure to put in your reference whether it's tithes, missions, building fund, etc.

Name: FlameTree Baptist Church
BSB: 704 913 Account: 4000 39103

You can also pay your tithes on our church website, under the 'tithes' tab.

Push pay is here! If you pay by credit card, this is an awesome new way you can give from your mobile phone. Simply text 'flametree' to 0488202202, click the link, and fill in the details.



Lighthouse Leadership Psychology & Training

Chris & Gretchen Mitchell are now available at the church office for life coaching, psychological counselling, prayer counselling and marriage counselling for people from FlameTree Church and people in the community. (Medicare rebates available)

For bookings & information please contact the Mitchell's on 0408 824 261 or check out their website at www.lighthouseleadership.com.au.



Sozo Ministries

Book a Sozo through the Church office. A Sozo session is a time for the Sozo team to sit down with you and, with the help of the Holy Spirit, walk you through the process of freedom and wholeness. Sozo is not a counseling session, but a time of interacting with Father, Son and Holy Spirit for wholeness, healing and pursuing of your destiny.



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Weekly Calendar

Sunday Service:

9:00am

Crèche

Sunday 9:20am

Kidz Church

Sunday 9:20am

Teen Church

Coming Soon

Young Adults

Sunday After AM Service

Ladies Group

Tuesday 9:30am

Jubilee Dancers

Thursday 4:30pm

Mums Group

Friday 9-11am

WildFire Youth

Friday 7-9pm