

2019/2020

PRAXEIS ANNUAL REPORT

Making disciples that multiply



Mission

To make disciples that multiply.

Vision

Praxeis is an ever-growing movement of passionate followers of Jesus, making disciples that multiply in all the world.



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FROM OUR NATIONAL DIRECTOR

Welcome to the annual report!

It's been amazing to see all that God has been doing in the midst of the incredible changes and challenges we face. How encouraging to look back.

Our vision remains to make disciples that multiply. In these two words - 'make disciples' (Mt 28:19) - we sum up Jesus' plan to change the world. To obey him is to love him. To follow him is to be his disciple. To follow Jesus is to be on mission with him.

Prayer is a core value of Praxeis. It is a fool that thinks he can do God's work without God's help. So prayer is central to all we do as we depend on God and align ourselves to his will. We see prayer as the place where God empowers us by his Spirit and we hear his voice and follow him. In prayer, we join with Jesus in saying, 'Your kingdom come'.

God's Word is our guide! A Discovery Group is a key part of the process, where people gather and explore together how to become disciples. The written Word becomes the living Word, spoken to our heart and then begins to transform us. This year we have had many thousands of people in Discovery Groups learning to become disciples.



Multiplication means that we focus on developing leaders and disciple-makers. Growth has been a mark of this year, as more and more workers and locations join in the vision. Of course in this COVID season, we have had to pivot and move a lot of training online.

We have seen a further strengthening of work in Australia and the nations. The work in India has become a movement with thousands of new disciples being added. We are really encouraged by the team in Hong Kong as they plant new Discovery Groups. The Seattle team continue to reach out to Immigrants and train others in movement. New Zealand now has multiple teams. Indonesia is growing workers in various regions. Eastern Europe is focussing on seven Gypsy regions and new shoots are emerging in Laos, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Papua New Guinea, and England.

Behind every great work is an even greater team! Our highly committed admin and support team set about to 'make it all happen'. Whether it is the finance area or website and training, each part plays an incredibly important role. The focus and unity in the team is a great blessing. And of course we are served by a great Board led by Toby Hall.

Those who partner with the vision financially and in prayer are often unseen, yet we couldn't do this without them (if you are one of them, thank you!). Our Easter Offering was fantastic, helping work in a number of locations affected by COVID. Everyone that partners with a Praxeis worker becomes a vital partner to our ministry.

As you read this report, I trust you will feel encouraged in faith and also have renewed commitment to making disciples and seeing God's kingdom come in our day.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Lawton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Dave Lawton
Praxeis National Director

PRAXEIS LOCATIONS

Australia

Victoria • Queensland • NSW
Western Australia • Central Australia

International

India • Hong Kong • Eastern Europe
New Zealand • USA • Singapore
South East Asia



2019 / 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

God continues to work in people's lives - causing spiritual hunger and opening their hearts to explore spiritual things. We follow God's leading to see movements take hold across Australia and around the world.



538

average hours of prayer
each week



315

workers sharing Jesus with
the harvest

LUKE 10:2

The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.



86

Discovery Groups in Australia
and around the world



773

people in groups, exploring the
Bible and discovering Jesus

“

Jesus did not manipulate, dominate or lobby for power. He never used force, blockades or violence to build his kingdom. Status, positions, offices, institutions and impressive buildings were not part of his method. Rather, his approach was incarnational and relational - mingling with people ... and following their relational streams.

PETER ROENNFELDT
Following the Apostles Vision

”

SPOTLIGHT ON INDIA

God is moving in powerful ways in India and thousands of people are meeting Jesus and following him.

The Disciple-Making Movement (DMM) continues to grow in four regions of Central India. The team have a vision to reach the unreached people of Central India and we praise God for the movement they are seeing across 3000 villages!

While DMM remains the core focus, Simon Rao and his team have had to adjust the way they connect with people due to COVID-19.

In this region, many of the people living in villages have little awareness of the virus and how they can protect themselves. As the country was forced into lockdown, many millions lost their jobs overnight, with little or no contingency or support. In response, Simon and the team began to distribute food and basic sanitary items to villages they were already working in, as well as building relationships with new communities.

Now as COVID-19 continues to rage throughout the country, the DMM team are looking to train people in the villages to protect themselves by wearing a mask, washing hands and social distancing. This will also help disciple-makers connect with new people of peace as they work to see many more thousands come to Jesus.



Women leaders are multiplying in India!

To ensure our metrics are transparent, we report on the exponential growth in India separately.



890

Discovery Groups



20,000

**people involved
as leaders, workers and people
discovering Jesus**



12,500

people baptised

MAKING DISCIPLES

The heart of Praxeis

Praxeis exists to make disciples of Jesus that multiply by sharing their faith within their networks - friends, family and new connections. It is this focus - making disciples who multiply - that motivates everything we do.

As disciples, we pray, engage with God's word and live out what we learn - always inviting others to join in and discover God for themselves. The Discovery Bible Study (DBS) is a tool that allows all of this to happen in a non-threatening and exploratory manner. A DBS is a simple Bible study that anyone can lead, even if they are not yet a follower of Jesus. These groups rely on the Holy Spirit to speak and work in peoples lives as they read, discuss and obey the stories of the Bible.

Discovery Bible Studies



Vicki had been praying for her friends in the local mother's group for some time.

She had had some spiritual conversations with a few of the mums but was looking for a chance to go deeper.

When COVID hit and the country was placed into lockdown - Vicki messaged her friends and let them know she wanted to use this very different time to invest in her

spiritual life. She told them she would be online at a particular time and open to anyone who would like explore the Bible with her. Vicki prayed that someone might join her.

Vicki praised God when four of her friends jumped on Zoom and together began to explore the Bible as part of a DBS.

This group continues to share and support one another as they read the Bible together. Vicki now prays that each of these mums will discover God's love and plan for their lives and families.

CATALYSING PRAYER

Interrupted by prayer

Our team in Sydney have been encouraged to see God literally interrupt them as they pray.

Recently as they prayed together, one of their team shared that his uncle had just been diagnosed with terminal cancer. This uncle had seemed non-spiritual and anti-Christian. So they prayed together for this man. Immediately after praying for him, the teammate got a text message from a Christian family member. He read out the message to those who were just praying - his uncle had decided to follow Jesus after a believer visited him in hospital.

In another time of prayer, the team were interrupted by a phone call. It was a mum who was really concerned for her son - an old footy mate that the team all knew. They had been discipling him in the past but he had returned to drugs and was now suffering a mental breakdown.

They stopped and prayed for their mate, and his mum (who did not know Jesus) joined in prayer over the phone.

Since this time of prayer, things have turned right around. This young man is now on medication and senses he has had a real wake up call from God and wants to follow Jesus. He's also been sharing with a friend who wants to learn about Jesus too.



On average, we have recorded 538 hours of prayer per week across the Praxeis network.



Prayer is central to the work of Praxeis, and we pray at all levels of our work and ministry through:

- weekly prayer emails
- praying in teams and Hubs for people and regions
- intentional prayer time for our nation and supporters
- 40 days of prayer and fasting.



Disciple-Making Movements are exploding all around the world. In many countries, people groups and cultures, disciples are being made at an unprecedented rate.

Disciple-makers are trying new and innovative ways to help people meet Jesus and yet at the core of every effective Disciple-Making Movement there is one common element ...

Prayer

DEVELOPING LEADERS AND TEAMS

Developing others to make disciples and multiply is core to the work of Praxeis.

Before COVID-19 restrictions, we had a number of face-to-face training events for disciple-makers, including:

- Inside Out: How movements begin in hard places - multiple gatherings around Australia, New Zealand and Singapore with Phil Alessi to learn from his experience seeing movements take hold in American prisons.
- Just-in-time Training - A group of disciple-makers and teams gathered in Rye, Victoria, to learn more about developing Discovery Groups and scripture lists.

However, once COVID-19 changed the world, we moved our training online; gathering multiple groups of people from all around the world.

One online training group focused on developing people who are already leaders in Christian ministry - introducing them to the DNA of Disciple-Making Movements.

Without multiplication, a Disciple-Making Movement is impossible.

Disciples making disciples is the key to the DMM process - it is embedded in the great commission.

So we train everyone to lead others ... to make disciples who make disciples.



This group of 13 leaders read, reflected, watched and met weekly to explore the vision God has given each of them and strategically flesh out their next steps to introduce DMM in their community.

Between the group, God has given each person a discipling vision for a people and a region including Hobart, Canberra, Myanmar, Thailand, Egypt, Africa, the United Kingdom and Laos.

We are praying for each of these leaders as they step out into the vision God has given them and can't wait to see how their simple and obedient actions will change the communities they are called to.

No more excuses

Close to tears, she blurted out: 'No more excuses, Lord! I'm not going to make any more excuses ...!'

Annika had been excited to join the rest of the WA Praxeis team for dinner and hear from Phil Alessi. She didn't expect to hear so clearly from the Holy Spirit.

Phil talked about praying for five people in each of the group's relational networks and focus on asking them to explore the Bible together.

Annika, a young mum with a three-month-old baby and two young sons, had heard a lot about Discovery Groups and making disciples. Her husband had already started reading the Bible with a couple of men. She had been avoiding the issue. And she'd been making excuses - very plausible excuses with such a young family needing plenty of her time.

But that Friday night the Holy Spirit disrupted her life, shredded her excuses and planted the seeds of faith and hope strongly in her heart. He wanted her to get on board and make disciples too.

When Phil invited the group of more than 20 people to pray, Annika was the first to open her heart. Her repentance and boldness in asking for opportunities to make disciples raised the sense of urgency and awareness of God at work in the room. It was palpable!

Within a week, Jill Birt (Praxeis worker) met with Annika in her home. A friend was making tea in the kitchen when Jill arrived. Annika said, 'Jill, this is my friend, Tash. We've just been prayer walking at my son's school. I've been trying to explain but can you tell her more about finding people of peace and how to start a Discovery Group?'

The next hour zipped along as the three ladies talked about Discovery Bible Studies, building prayer support and finding people of peace.

Annika was part of the MyWorld group at Parkerville, in Perth's Hills. Pray for her as she takes the right size steps in obedience to Jesus' command to make disciples.



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

As a movement passionate about equipping all disciples to make disciples, we develop resources to help people make an impact among their family, friends and community.

Households of faith

As COVID-19 took hold of the nation (and the world) and restrictions on gatherings stopped churches being able to meet, we knew that Praxeis was uniquely placed to speak into this space.

A core part of our work is focused on families and small groups meeting together to form Discovery Groups - whether in person or online.

We gathered a few people and brainstormed possible resources we could develop to make it easy for people to continue to grow in their relationship with Jesus.

We identified that resources for families and pastors would be key as everyone grappled with how best do 'church' in the time of a pandemic.

Out of this we released Households of Faith, an online 'how-to-guide' for facilitating Discovery Groups among families at home and for churches who could no longer meet together.



To access the Households of Faith resources, go to: praxeis.org/resources

**COMING
SOON**

DMM Essentials

We believe every disciple can make disciples - Jesus said it himself.

Sharing stories and experience from DMM workers, this online training takes learners step-by-step through the essentials of seeing disciples made.

Learners will explore the tools to share their faith as they dig deep into the Bible, reflect on the way Jesus made disciples and hear from people who are putting these tools into practise.

DISCIPLE-MAKING RESOURCES FOR EVERYONE

We believe that making disciples is the role of every person who follows Jesus. Therefore, we are committed to making high-quality, easy to access resources. These resources aim to equip people to introduce their family, friends and networks to Jesus.

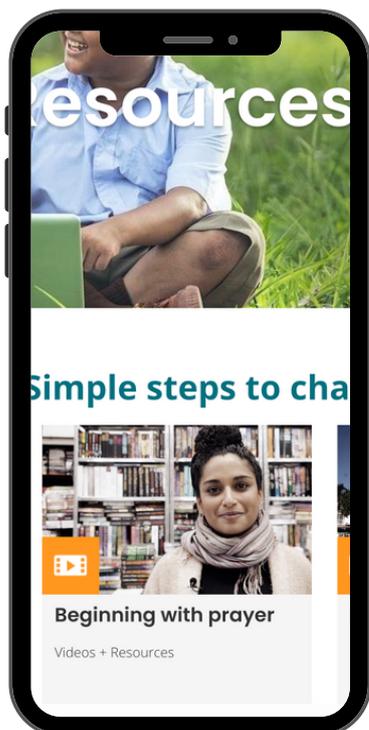
The Praxeis Website

In the last financial year, we launched our brand new website. Our aim was to make this a space where people can access training, DMM resources and give safely and securely to workers and Praxeis as a whole.

Over the course of 2019/2020, we have worked hard to fulfil this aim as we continue to add resources and training opportunities, such as:

- Following Jesus: Simple steps to change the world
- Downloadable resources on various topics
- Blog posts
- Great DMM stories
- Books available for purchase.

It has been wonderful to hear and see how people are using these resources to learn for themselves, to help train their teams and as part of church services focused on discipleship.

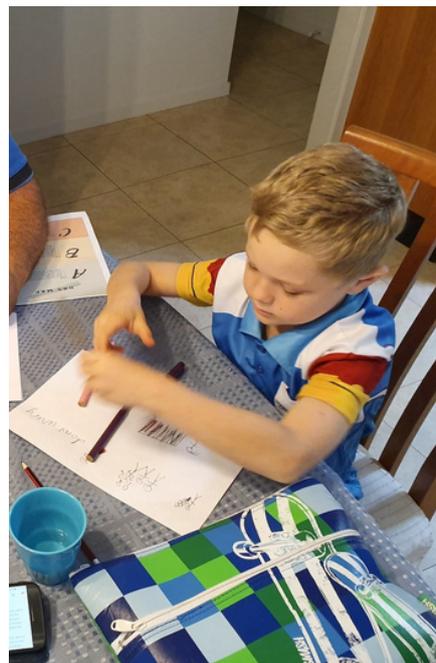


Following Jesus: Simple steps to change the world

In this video series, released in October 2019, we focus on five key areas important to see Disciple-Making Movements take hold:

- What is a Disciple-Making Movement?
- Beginning with prayer.
- Having spiritual conversations.
- Building a team.
- Identifying people of peace.

Along with each video, there are interviews and downloadable resources to help people, groups and teams catch the vision of disciple-making and learn how we can follow Jesus to change our world.



ACCESS MINISTRIES

Central and Southern India

When India entered the world's largest lockdown, many people earning day-wages lost their income instantly.

In Central India, food and basic supplies were given to support the poorest of the poor in the Disciple-Making Movement fellowship across the region. The team in Southern India sought the permission of village chiefs among the Irular people to enter the village with rice and other basic items. We continue to pray that God will open doors to this people group.

In Southern Central India, one village is home to a large group of Sorcerers. They warmly accepted the supplies from our team and we are praying this will lead to ongoing relationships here.

Our team in India has realised that we may be living with COVID-19 for some time and so now include basic health education as part of their access ministry.

They are training DMM workers to go into villages that have little resources to educate local people on what they can be doing to protect themselves from this deadly virus.



Access ministries are about partnering with communities to meet real needs, while allowing workers to build new relationships in the harvest. These ministries generally grow out of felt needs within the community that a Praxeis worker or team can work with them to provide answers.

With COVID-19 acutely impacting the poor, our Easter offering was directed towards supporting access ministries that focused on caring for the needs of people in the DMM network. Over \$30,000 was raised and is being distributed to ministries in India, Eastern Europe and Indonesia.

Eastern Europe

Working with a pastor who has churches among the Gypsy people of Ukraine, our funds from the Easter Offering have been used to provide pasta, oil, bread and other staple foods across 16 villages.

To date, 400 packages of food and soap have been distributed. This is the first of a number of projects that will occur over the coming months and years.

Gabi is excited about the possibilities of seeing movement begin within this community and is praying that an access ministry will grow and flourish.



Indonesia

The team in Indonesia are working among their DMM network to reach out in practical and tangible ways during COVID-19. They are praying that as they go, they will encounter people of peace.



Learning from African DMM workers during the Ebola crisis, the team have endeavoured to support the local communities as they adapt to life with social restrictions.

They have been providing masks and essential items to many in their network and are now experimenting with growing catfish and greens to feed and provide income for families. They hope to connect and support 150 families as part of a disciple-making network.

What is a disciple?

A disciple is a person who **prays** to Jesus, **reads** the Word, **obeys** the Word and **shares** the Word across their life.

We recognise the power of the Holy Spirit to speak to and guide people as they dig into the Bible and learn what it means to follow Jesus.

PIONEERING NEW LOCATIONS

We always seek God for his leading - praying that he would guide us to new people and locations. We are thankful for God's work as he breaks new ground in people's lives.

Soon after, a few members of the Praxeis team met with Nick and his wife to prayer walk their neighbourhood. Through invitation with friends and training opportunities - there are now five families who are working together to see a movement take hold in Tauranga. The wider team supports this group by facilitating a monthly Hub to encourage, equip and fuel their passion to see disciples make disciples.

The team in New Zealand is focused on the Golden Triangle - Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga. They pray that the growth of workers they are seeing will lead to many people in these cities discovering Jesus for the first time.

Tasmania

In January, Dave and Colleen Lawton visited a number of towns in Tasmania to meet with people interested in DMM and to train local church leaders in discipling people through Discovery Groups.

This was indeed God-ordained timing. As the COVID restrictions were implemented and in-person church gatherings stopped, the learning from this training helped leaders introduce DBS to the wider church. While people couldn't meet face-to-face, church members were given the opportunity to join online Discovery Groups.

New Zealand

Joy, one of our New Zealand team members, felt God call her to contact Nick, a person she met in Tauranga when sharing about Disciple-Making Movements.

Joy texted Nick to see if he would like to connect in with the DMM team. His reply showed just how God had been working in his life. He said, 'This kind of thing is exactly what God has called us to do'.



Papua New Guinea

Praxeis worker, Steve Behrens grew up on the mission field in Papua New Guinea. While, today he spends most of his time making disciples in Far North Queensland with his family, in November 2019, Steve felt called to return to PNG to prayer walk villages across the western region.

One of Steve's friends from North Queensland offered to fly him from village to village in PNG using his small plane. Steve also hoped he would catch up with a childhood friend he had not seen for many years but had no idea where he lived or how to contact him.

Steve was delighted when he hopped off the plane at his first stop in a village called Balimo - his childhood friend was there to meet him. Steve's friend was a follower of Jesus and enjoyed learning more about making disciples through Discovery Bible reading. Together, with a few other men, they began prayer walking a neighbouring village.



Over the two weeks, Steve travelled from village to village, staying in the houses of people who welcomed him in; sharing their faith and praying for the village.

On his final day in the Balimo area and just before he hopped on the plane to go elsewhere, Steve was approached by a man. He was from the first neighbouring village they had prayer walked and had travelled three hours in a canoe to see Steve before he left. This man said that he was a follower of Jesus and after hearing Steve share about discovery Bible reading, he began to share with others. It seems this man was a person of peace as he had gathered 47 men from his village who wanted to learn more about Jesus.

In the time since, Steve has had some opportunity to encourage this group., however, communication is often hard. The group of men continue to meet weekly and are now taking what they learn back to their family and friends. We praise God for his work as we believe there are up to 500 people now discovering Jesus.

Hong Kong

There is a growing team of disciple-makers in Hong Kong connecting in with Praxeis. This team is led by Mike and Alice and they are seeing God move in great ways as they spend time in prayer and reach out to spiritually hungry people.

Mike loves hospitality - inviting people to his family's home for a meal to share life and faith. However, at a Praxeis training event earlier in the year, he was challenged by the passage in Luke 10, where Jesus sent out the 72. He saw that Jesus sent out the disciples to be invited into other people's homes.

So back in Hong Kong, Mike and Alice changed their prayer. Instead of praying that God would introduce them to people they could invite to dinner, they asked God to send people who would give them food as a sign of spiritual openness.

After prayer walking their village and asking God for people who would show them hospitality, they met Mr R. As they got to know each other, Mr R invited them to his home for a meal with his family.

This first dinner turned into another one, and another. While Mr R seemed like an unlikely person of peace, God was answering Mike and Alice's prayer through this family.

So Mike took his Bible along to their next dinner and asked if the family would like to do a DBS. To his surprise they were happy to do this and at the end of their time together, said they wanted to do a DBS each week.

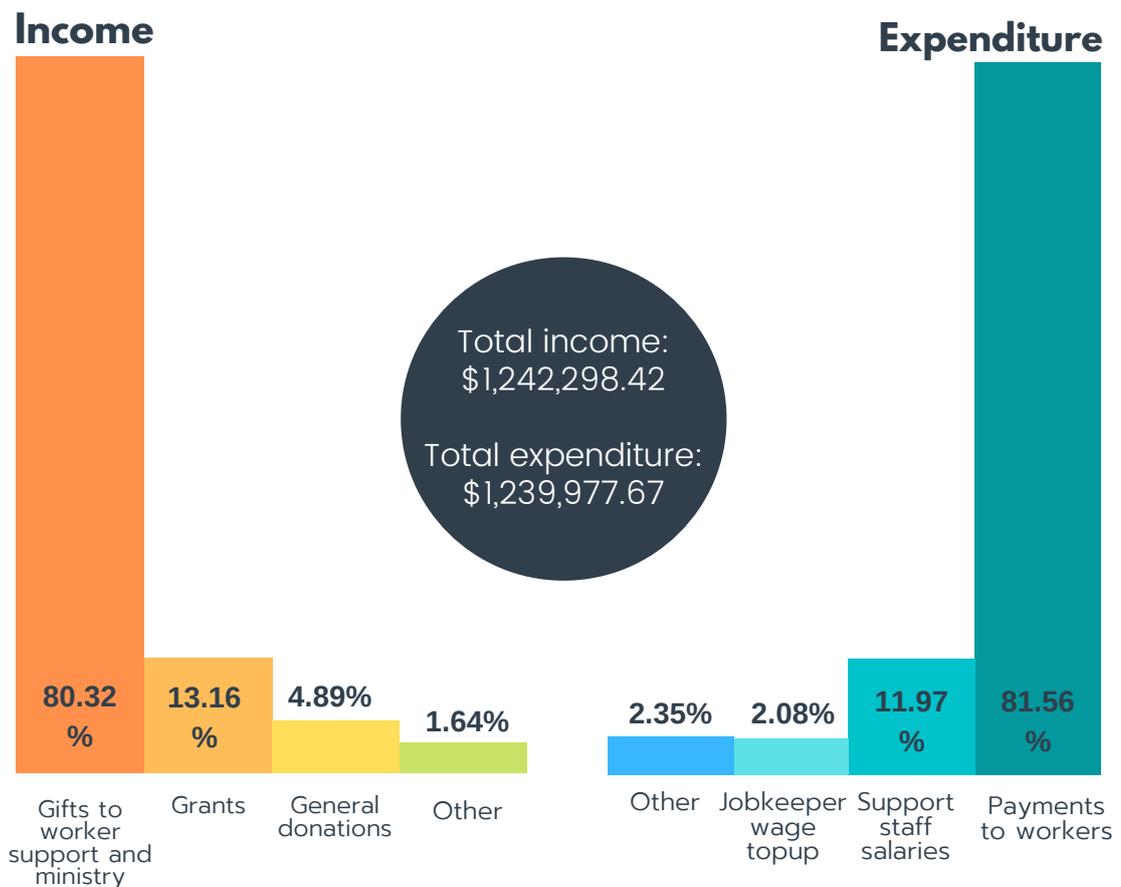
Mr R shared that he had wanted to know more about following Jesus since he was a child. He had seen his uncle's life change after becoming a Christian in prison. Mr R was amazed by his uncle's transformation but had always been too scared to ask anyone.

At their very next DBS, Mr R and his wife committed to following Jesus. Mr R is now beginning to invite others to build relationship and discover God.

This is just one of many stories of people coming to faith in Jesus in Hong Kong. We are so excited to see how God will continue to work in this region.



FINANCE



Thanks to the generosity of so many wonderful people and partners of Praxeis, we have seen a:

- 59% year-on-year increase in general donations including our Easter Offering
- 48% increase in grants.

We continually thank God for the way he funds the ministry of Praxeis through faithful people and organisations committed to introducing people to Jesus and making disciples.

FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

I am delighted to endorse the 2019/2020 Praxeis Annual Report to you.

This year has been a difficult one for our world. It is hard to believe that at the end of 2019, terms such as 'coronavirus' and 'social distancing' were virtually unheard of. And yet, in a seemingly short time, we have adapted (and continue to adapt) to our changing world.

In the midst of the chaos and challenges the pandemic has introduced, God continues to use Praxeis to help bring about his plan for the world. The number of people committing their lives to disciple-making continues to grow as we move into new regions and innovate to reach the harvest.



We have been humbled by the generosity of our donors in this very difficult time of COVID-19.

It is pleasing to see that we are in a strong financial position as we move into 2020/21 with thanks to a number of regular givers as part of our Give2Multiply campaign, sacrificial support of our workers and many generous once off donations.

We are always thankful for the commitment of our grant partners, who this year agreed to match gifts of \$5,000 or more. This opportunity will continue throughout the coming financial year

As we look to the coming year, we are confident that God is in control and has much work for us to do. While our worldly circumstances continue to change, the call of God on his people does not – we are to make disciples who make disciples.

We as Praxeis hold tight onto the calling God has given us and look forward with hope, gratitude and great expectation. On behalf of the Praxeis Board, we thank you for your ongoing partnership.

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'David Hill', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Board Chair



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