

# Australia Board Quarterly Report

Hillsong Church  
November 2023



Contact: [governance@hillsong.com](mailto:governance@hillsong.com)



# ‘The Purpose of the Church’ Message from ROBERT FERGUSSON

Dear Church,

Why exactly do we gather as a community of believers? What is the difference between a church and a social club? What sets the church apart from other organisations?

One way to answer these questions is to ask where our focus lies. I suspect for many of us our focus is inward. We want to belong to a group from which we can personally benefit.

It could be argued that this was also true of the early church. The Bible says they gathered around two truths: teaching, and fellowship (Acts 2:42). Their common faith bound them together into one united, yet diverse community in which each participant was helped and valued. This inward focus was essential for the health of the community.

For many of us, however, there is also an outward focus. We want to be part of an organisation that makes a difference in the wider community, and in which we can find fulfillment and purpose. This was also true of the early church. Both the commission and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit turned their attention outward. As they were thrust from Jerusalem to share their message, they began to serve and influence cities, and individuals within the community began to live a life of significance (Acts 8:4-8).

Both these inward and outward foci are an integral part of the church but they can also be found in other non-church organisations.

So, what is our distinctive?

Perhaps it is a third focus, an upward one. Jesus Christ is our source, our raison d’etre, and our goal. Our worship of Him is central to all we do. It is Jesus Christ Himself who sets us apart. He is the One who makes the church so attractive.

In all our necessary tasks and beneficial functions, may we never forget that the primary purpose of the church is spiritual (Ephesians 3:10).

**Every Blessing,  
Robert**  
*Spiritual Advisory Team Member*





## Message from the Chair

### DR STEPHEN CROUCH

Dear Church,

I am pleased to present our third quarterly report for this year. It is our commitment to continue to communicate with you on our church's progress toward our vision of building "A healthy church, changing lives through Christ".

We are very encouraged by the vision and direction Pastors Phil and Lucinda are leading us toward. We believe it is a God inspired, expansive and generous vision. We can all find a place for our gifts, talents and passion in our future at Hillsong Church.

They have spent much of their time focused on our Australian church this year. After establishing and communicating our mission, they have completed the task of selecting an energetic, fresh Key Support Team (KST). and working with that team to develop great strategy that will be rolled out in the days, months and years ahead. Exciting times!

In each of our Quarterly Board Reports, we have included a progress report. You can find this on page 7 of this report. As a board, it is our goal to remain accountable to you regarding our progress, and to complete and embed five board review recommendations and five pastor credentialing recommendations. Our ambition is to complete these before Christmas this year.

The Pastor Credentialing team has been diligently refining pathways for pastors, ensuring both integrity and compatibility. Pastoring our local campuses around the globe, building a healthy church with trust and honesty.

On behalf of our board, we continue to stand united in our mission to build:

- Healthy church communities
- Purpose-filled Jesus followers
- Significant and sustainable social impact

May God's blessing saturate you, your family, and our church.

Dr Stephen Crouch  
Chair



# Pastor Credentialling Process Update

## CREDENTIALLING OF PASTORS

A credentialling working group was established in 2022 with the goal of ensuring pastors are equipped to have a fruitful ministry that can be of service to the people of Hillsong, in a way that safeguards and serves those to whom they minister.

Over the past 20 months, there has been extensive consultation and research to identify an improved model that will serve Hillsong globally in our many continents and cultures. Below is a progress update of key areas:

## FITNESS FOR MINISTRY

Ministry is a holy calling. Those called to ministry have a special responsibility before God, to care for, pastor, and lead those in our churches. Our pastors are deeply committed to this calling. (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Peter 5:1-4)

It is important to ensure that those who have a call to ministry also possess the attributes and maturity to carry out their responsibilities. We are introducing psychological and personality assessments to determine suitability (or fitness) to hold a credential before a candidate is accepted into a ministry role. This step will also help identify areas where support may be needed.

All credential holders will be required to undertake continuous professional supervision and other accountability systems. The Global Senior Pastor is subject to the same/equivalent processes. These screening and preventative measures can be utilised to reduce a likelihood of misconduct by ministers and promote safe environments at Hillsong.

The team have identified independent, external organisations who provide professional psychological consultation to faith-based organisations and agencies, supporting the work of the broader church. Our aim is to work with these bodies and develop these skills internally.

## SINGLE BODY TO HANDLE COMPLAINTS

Over the past 18 months, our complaints handling policy has been updated and is published on the Hillsong Website: <https://hillsong.com/concern/>.

Those who wish to make a complaint can email [complaints@hillsong.com](mailto:complaints@hillsong.com) or telephone +61 1300 53 53 53.

All complaints are received by *Safe Church*.

*Safe Church* are a separate department in our church who can report directly to the Global Board when required. The *Safe Church* staff have been trained in the handling of complaints they receive.

## COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE GLOBAL SENIOR PASTOR

The review recommended complaints about the Global Senior Pastors be outsourced to an external, independent investigation process. The credentialling team have reviewed a number of options and identified an independent organisation who work with the professional standards units for various denominations and agencies. They are skilled at investigations for senior leaders and complainants.

## A SINGLE CREDENTIALLING BODY

Andreas Nielson, Lead Pastor of Hillsong Sweden, has recently been charged with overseeing the credentialling team on behalf of the Global Board. Global Board member Ana Loback, an occupational psychologist and senior executive coach, will also be part of the credentialling team. This team will continue to assist in ensuring the same consistent, high standards are applied to the credentialling process globally.

We are looking to appoint a seasoned pastor to outwork all credentialling requirements. This role includes the initial threshold screening process, and will also ensure that professional supervision, professional development units and theological training requirements are met annually for all credential holders, including the Global Senior Pastor.

## SUPPORT FOR PASTORS

We are deeply committed to ensuring that our pastors are even more well-equipped and supported to fulfill their ministry with strength and resilience. In pursuit of this, we are in the process of establishing a support system and program targeting their specific requirements, aimed at assisting our pastors in navigating the unique challenges and complexities of ministry and leadership within a church environment. Our commitment to their well-being highlights our belief that pastors who receive generous support and care will be even better equipped to effectively serve and lead our congregation and their communities.





# Message from the Global Senior Pastors

## PHIL & LUCINDA DOOLEY

Dear Church,

We are truly encouraged by the uplifting reports in the past few months, witnessing the signs of health within our congregations. We have seen more and more individuals making the life-changing decision to follow Jesus, and a deepening sense of connection and involvement within our church families across multiple Australian campuses.

Lucinda and I had a fantastic time at Brisbane Central and Greater Springfield, I also had the privilege of being with our South West Campus and praying for Tim Beasant as he steps into leading the campus.



**Visiting Hillsong  
Brisbane Central**



**Family Sunday  
Hills Campus, Sydney**



**Father's Day  
Hillsong Melbourne East**

We also want to share that in early October, we had the privilege of attending the annual gathering of all the Hillsong lead pastors in Portugal. During our time there, we had the opportunity to visit many of the Hillsong churches across Europe, and it was an incredibly inspiring experience.

Throughout the second half of the year, our primary focus has been on gaining clarity for our Australian Strategy, which will guide us into the future that God has in store for us. In June, the Key Support Team (KST) gathered at an offsite meeting to progress this, and we have been diligently working on its development ever since.

In September, we dedicated time to connect with our Campus Pastors and Key Support Team, engaging in meaningful discussions about the strategy and how we can collectively outwork our mission together. We look forward to sharing our plans with you all in the months to come.

In line with our mission to nurture and grow our church communities, it is essential to remind ourselves of the purpose of our KST. This team serves to support our church, our campuses and the dedicated campus pastors who, in turn, serve our congregation and community as we seek to build healthy church communities. For additional details about this team, please refer to the following page.



**Lauren Thomson  
Head of Social Impact**

We are pleased to announce our latest appointment, Lauren Thomson, who will be stepping into the role of Head of Social Impact Support. This role is a vital part of our Australia KST, and we believe Lauren's passion and dedication will make a significant impact on our mission.

Through our longstanding partnership with Compassion, we recently organised a Compassion Sunday event nationwide across all our Sunday church services. We were honoured to have Clare Steele, Compassion's CEO, in attendance, and the day was a heartwarming success. The generosity of our church community resulted in over 350 children finding sponsors, making it a special and impactful day.

In these challenging times, we urge you to join us in prayer for peace in Israel and Gaza. Pray for the lives of Israeli and Palestinian people affected by the ongoing situation. Let us stand united to pray for wisdom to guide Israel and global leaders as they make key decisions affecting countless lives. Additionally, we ask for the peace, comfort, and protection of our Hillsong Israel family, also Damon and Emily Buck, who serve as our lead pastors, to be in your prayers.

May God continue to bless our church, our staff, our team of volunteers, and each one of you.

**Thank you  
Phil & Lucinda**



# Australia Key Support Team

This team serves to support our campuses and the dedicated campus pastors who, in turn, serve our congregation and community as we seek to build healthy church communities.



# Australia Board Progress Report

- In progress
- Action completed
- To be commenced
- Progress delayed

## Australia Board Review

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1. Provide ongoing support and leadership development to both of the Global Senior Pastors.
2. Further separate the membership of the Australia and Global Boards whilst leveraging the Church's global governance improvement plans and actions.
3. Align the Australia Board's plan to improve Hillsong Church's governance to the global plan, and provide leadership in that pursuit.
4. Align the development of a new strategic plan, clear goals and priorities for Australia with that of Hillsong Church globally.
5. Align how the Australia Board understands, measures and rebuilds trust and health from the inside out with that of the church globally.

## Responsibility

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## Progression

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Australia Board



Australia Board



Australia Board



Australia Board



Australia Board



# Hillsong Australia Board



Dr Stephen Crouch  
GAICD, FCA, B.Bus,  
MEc, DBA  
**Chair**



Phil Dooley  
Global  
Senior Pastor  
B.Bus



Dane Gambrell  
GAICD, PMC



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Dr Robyn Ober  
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Amanda Tay  
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David Thambiratnam  
MEng, GDipMngt







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