



# BREE MILLS

## EXPLORING THE BIGGER PICTURE

Every now and then you come across someone who leaves a strong impression on you, not so much because of what they say, but how they say it. That is precisely the feeling we had when chatting with Bree Mills, the Associate Pastor for Missional Discipleship at Glen Waverly Baptist Church in Victoria and a mother of three.

Bree is currently undertaking a Masters of Missional Leadership, a new postgraduate degree at Morling College and the first of its kind in Australia.

No stranger to academic study, Bree has completed a Bachelor of Science with a major in Neuroscience followed by a Bachelor of Theology and a Graduate Diploma at Ridely College. She has been serving in ministry roles for over 10 years.

With the support of Brian, her husband of 13 years, Bree successfully combines a busy family life with study and her role in a large church. We learn how Bree is living out her calling in life in this fascinating Q & A insight into her life.

## WHAT DOES MISSIONAL DISCIPLESHIP MEAN TO YOU?

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Biblically, Discipleship is the process from hearing the Gospel to being sent and released to lead. 'Missional Discipleship' takes that leadership role a step further. My role includes outreach; teaching and training; leadership development; equipping and releasing new missional leaders, and managing our missional communities. I currently also oversee the teams that coordinate our gathered celebrations.

My faith is the result of a missionally focused youth ministry. I have always been very passionate about ‘doing Church’ in a way that allows me to take my faith beyond the Church. That’s what Missional Discipleship means to me. My apostolic gifting draws me to continually think of new ways for God's Kingdom to be seen in our world.

It's been clear throughout my journey that God's hand has been on this transition. Sure, it has been difficult at times, but I'm always blown away by God's grace and the fact that his hand is so clearly evident in our team, our church and in our local community.

## WHAT ARE THE MAIN PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES YOU ARE WORKING ON AT PRESENT?

One of the key projects I am working on at the moment is raising up a leader to oversee our missional communities, of which there are currently seven, with the potential for a few more next year as well as the possibility of another church plant. So our focus right now is on leadership development. I'm also working on LAUNCH, our new gap year program, which will seek to train young adults in Discipleship, Leadership and Mission.

## WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE MASTERS OF MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP AT MORLING AND HOW ARE YOU FINDING IT SO FAR?

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I was looking to study missiology in leadership and searched far and wide for a tertiary institution that understood missiology from a local and global perspective and leadership from more than just a CEO-style leadership and management perspective. Being a wife, mother and leader at our church, I also needed the course to be flexible. Morling ticked all those boxes.

So far the course has been excellent, albeit challenging at times, which is something I feel I needed. The course is pushing me to read things I would not normally read from authors who present their views in different ways. I have learned that missional thinking is not new and has been there all along in the history of the Church. I've also learned that my views were somewhat shallow. I had the headline in my thinking, not the whole article.

Engaging with other course participants has seen my confidence grow and I find myself contributing to in depth theological discussions far more than I would have felt comfortable to previously. I think my pastor would say that this has been the biggest change in me, not just confidence to articulate my missional views, but my theological views and the importance of establishing a solid theological grounding. Overall, my studies are helping me explore the bigger picture and be more focused in the way I choose to move forward.

## HOW HAS YOUR CHURCH COMMUNITY BEEN SUPPORTING YOU ON THIS JOURNEY?

The support has been wonderful. My pastor has been right behind me every step of the way, giving me study leave for intensives and assignments. **As a Church we live by our missional model, so many of our young people have also jumped on board to support me with the kids. I have been so blessed.** ■