

Why Awaken the West?

There has never been a spiritual awakening in any country or locality that did not begin in united prayer. The Great Revival in Melbourne in 1900 started with concerted, sustained, united prayer. The needs of the West are great, but God is greater. He will bring an awakening as we commit ourselves to pray together. "Awakening the West" is an inspiring vision!

Rob Isaachsen, Coordinator, Melbourne Pastors Network and "Transforming Melbourne"

You are invited to share in an exciting cooperative project between churches in the Western Suburbs of Melbourne to reach out together to our cities with the love of Christ.

There are more than 300 church congregations in the West ministering to a community of over 680,000 people across 7 municipal areas. But there is a widening gap between the condition of the average Aussie and the impact and influence of the Church. We believe the Church needs to shift its focus from an institutional orientation to more of a community orientation in order to truly be salt and light in our cities.

The people of the West are hungering for answers that none of us alone can effectively meet. We are encouraging churches to work in partnership in the gospel by finding ways back to one another through relational unity and ways forward to community credibility.

Relational Unity

My prayer is ... that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. **John 17:20-21**

Pastors/Ministers are the primary shapers of church values, strategies and direction. Unless the pastors are in unity how can we expect the churches to work together. And what brings unity like nothing else is a relationship of trust, which we have found grows best when pastors pray together.

As an example, in Hobsons Bay over the last two years we have seen a growing desire in the hearts of pastors to meet with one another in prayer and to bless each other.

Despite the busy schedule of shepherding the people of God they have understood the need for mutual support and burden bearing and have found a renewed strength to serve in both the Church and community.

What Awakening West wants to facilitate and nurture are local churches working together within their own community area, whether this is an entire city or just a suburb or two. We are encouraging pastors within their area of influence to begin to form these relationships and we will offer to help in identifying and linking pastors in networks throughout the west.

Community Credibility

Unless the church rediscovers its primary role as bridge builder, the incarnational power of the gospel will remain hidden, and the credibility necessary to reach a culture of cynical, experiential, and spiritually hungry souls will be lost. Even worse, the church's incomparable message of eternal and abundant life, despite relentless weekly proclamation, will continue to be largely ignored. People will simply no longer listen to or attend churches that seem incapable of living out what is preached. Bridges of influence - tangible and evident through the lifestyles and good works of believers - are the only answer. -**Robert Lewis**, The Church of Irresistible Influence

The church needs to present the full gospel to the world and this requires both proclamation and demonstration - truth and proof. We need to rediscover ways to connect to our communities and the most significant evidence of the gospel is good works. As Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

To achieve this change in focus Awakening West is encouraging the establishing of small inter-church mission-focused groups under the guidance of the local ministers, which pray, research opportunities and engage the Church to work together in reaching the community. We are calling these **Nyuyuni Outreach Fellowships**. "Nyuyuni" (pronounced new-uni) comes from the Pitjantjatjarra word which carries the images of the logs of an overnight fire being pushed together and gently blown on until the flame is re-ignited.

Some of the ways in which we envisage the body of Christ working together in missions are such things as Open Crowd Festivals, School Programs, Community Blessing days, Youth and Children's Outreach, etc.

History of Awakening West

For me as a pastor of a non-English congregation, the concept of Christmas West was really far beyond anything we had been doing in the last 30 years. But we did go out of our comfort zones - we got together with our other brothers and sisters from the other denominations and what we had experienced in Christmas West 2000 was far beyond any expectations we had. It was excellent, fantastic. **Pastor Milo Velebir**, Slovak Lutheran Church, Laverton.

Awakening West grew out of an initiative called Christmas West which sought to reclaim Christmas for Jesus in 2000 and 2001 and the desire of a small group of pastors to support and pray for each other. Rather than planning a single event there was a desire to continue to find ways of outreaching throughout the year.

Awakening Hobsons Bay has also formed as the first local municipal arm of Awakening West. As many of the pastors/ministers in Hobsons Bay have gathered for prayer they have discovered an incredible appreciation for one another and have linked together through the Aussie Awakening to enabled the vision for Awakening West to be born.

The Aussie Awakening

The Awakening has given me a platform to go and invite every church in the region to be involved. **Rev Craig Adams**, Baptist Church, Qld

The whole Awakening movement had its beginning in a 1988 Prayer Gathering around Australia's new Parliament House. During the 90s Easter Marches were organised right around Australia and received significant media coverage. After a review by the heads of churches in Australia, the new direction of the Aussie Awakening is to partner with local churches for mission into the 21st Century. Awakening provides significant mission resources and has a vision for inter-church missions throughout all regions of Australia.

Awakening West - Churches in the Western Suburbs of Melbourne reaching out together with the love of Christ.

Support

The Nyuyuni groups and participating churches will be supported through Awakening West with the following resources:

- A strategy for connection with the general public: a process that makes for warm connection and engagement and provides an opportunity for people to choose the life of Christ for themselves.
- Linking with others in the western region for mutual support and encouragement. Through Awakening we are all further connected to other regions within Victoria and across the Nation.
- Training courses for those engaged in mission through the Aussie Awakening and Fusion.
- A stunning library of 100 different Australian-based mission strategy ideas for reaching every part of community and every interest.
- Access to local training by experienced people in the kinds of outreach you take up.

Networking

Awakening West has established a website www.awakeningwest.com for updates to the Nyuyuni groups and churches of the West. This is for the purposes of establishing a strong network & encouraging sharing of ideas & resources.

Also available within the website is the ability for each municipal area in the West to provide distinctly local information about the community, church, connections, events, ministries and news and to enable each area to develop a unique ownership of the Awakening movement.

With such dynamic interaction between churches it is expected that "community-friendly" communication formats will be developed to promote events & ministries within each local area. It is envisioned that different forms of media will be used including the internet, newspapers, radio, billboards, brochures, etc and that these would vary from single event promotion to calendar of events, ministries, thought-provoking statements/articles, etc.

www.awakeningwest.com

Sharing

One of the most exciting aspects of developing pastors prayer networks and Nyuyuni groups across the West is the opportunity for sharing of resources – people, equipment, ideas, training, etc. Where it may have previously been impractical to put on certain events due to limited resources, commitment, experience or cost constraints it is expected that through pooling together there will be a significant boost in outreach activities by the churches.

Next steps from here

If you'd like to be a part of the dream of Awakening West to see everyone in the West reached with the good news of Jesus Christ, contact us for further information on:

- Connecting with other **pastors in prayer** in your area
- Joining a **Nyuyuni mission group** in your area.
- Obtaining a **Missions Resources** catalogue.
100 different manuals, videos, brochures and more.... for reaching families, youth, children, elderly and many special groups such as the disabled, ethnic people and so on.

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Awakening West

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Email: info@awakeningwest.com

If you would like to register as a partner of Awakening West complete the following registration and forward to us.

CONTACT DETAILS	
Title	
Name	
Address	
Suburb	
Postcode	
Church	
Phone	
Email	

Emailing of Awakening Updates (mthly)

Mailing of Awakening News (3-6 mthly)



Churches in the Western Suburbs of Melbourne reaching out together with the love of Christ.

Some recent quotes:

Australians are flocking to spiritualists and psychics on business and relationship matters as they lose touch with mainstream churches and traditional forms of counselling, experts say. -Sunday Herald Sun, July 7, 2002.

Churches that are missional, focussed beyond themselves and their own needs, tend to be more effective... Many churches have some way to go before they can be said to have an outward focus. - National Church Life Survey 2001.



Together, we can make a difference!

Awakening West