

# From the Eldership Council 2008 - A year of consolidation

To NationsHearters

At the beginning of 2008, we believed that this year would be one of consolidation. It has been just that.

The focus for the Eldership Council has been on three main fronts:

- *support for our Ministry Team;*
- *pastoral care and prayer support for our congregation; and*
- *continued development of the governance structures for NationsHeart.*

As we come to our AGM in November, I am writing on behalf of the Eldership Council to inform you of the progress that is being made on this third front – that of governance. The work that is being done on governance includes the issues that were raised and points for further clarification that were requested by members at the 2007 AGM.

This year the Eldership Council has become better informed on how governance structures operate within churches. We have met with various professionals in the field and attended training.

As a result of these meetings, research, learning and reflection, the Eldership Council has determined the following course of action:

- **The role of elder at NationsHeart needed to be and now has been clearly defined.** Further work to determine the length of tenure, the size of eldership council, the affirmation process, and the identification, encouragement and mentoring of new elders remains to be discussed.
- Next month the Eldership Council will be meeting to complete work on the establishment of the **mission of NH**; its **core business** for the next 2-4 years; and the **development of goals and strategies** consistent with the core business.
- From mid November to mid December, **Michael Pilbrow will be working with the Eldership Council and Ministry Team as a consultant.** In this role he will facilitate to develop a picture of the needs of our Ministry Team to enable us to achieve the goals and strategies of the core business. He will also be involved in the process of Ministry Team review and focus of the Ministry Team member's roles and job specifications. Michael will provide us with 3-6 monthly reviews of this work to help us keep up to date with changing needs. Although Michael does this consultancy work on a professional basis, he has specifically requested that we do not pay him for the time he commits to us.
- In early 2009 we will engage Celia Irving to work with us as a consultant on the **development of specific policies consistent with the church's mission, core business and goals.** This will include OHS, child safety and risk assessment policy documents. Celia Irving works throughout Australia in the development of these policies for churches and denominations.

Two other issues raised for action to the Eldership Council at the 2007 AGM were **membership rules** and the **establishment of a PBI**. A policy document on the membership rules for NH will be presented at the AGM. No further work has been done on the PBI through the course of 2008. This will be picked up in 2009.

We ask that you pray for the Eldership Council and Ministry Team over the coming 6 weeks as it is going to be a busy time of consolidating much of what we have done year.

At the elders meeting on 15 October, we spent some time in prayer recommitting ourselves to our roles in Eldership Council and Ministry Team. We are reminded of the joy we find in being able to serve our NH community. We are looking forward to being able to share with you and being able to receive your feedback on the mission of NH.

*Kara Potter*

Chair of Elders  
16 October 2008