Laying Down Our Plans

Terry and Jackie Harris 5 June 2018



Around 2001, William Marais was visiting Kingdom Faith Church in Horsham, UK, and spotted a young, married couple (Vanessa from Australia & Adam from UK) in the Bible school kitchen, which led to him asking Colin Urqhuart (their lead pastor) if they could be released to move to South Africa to help set up a Bible school in Edgemead, South Africa.
This young couple happened to be our daughter and son in law, Adam and Vanessa Hellyer, and thus started a biannual visit to South Africa for Jackie and I (who were living in Western Australia at the time). So came our first contact with William & Pam Marais in 2005.

> We also began looking for a church in Australia that came somewhat close to what we had experienced at JoshGen.

A while after meeting the Marais', the church William was leading transitioned into Joshua Generation Church (JoshGen), and along with the church moving over, the leaders (including our daughter and son in law) moved over too. We continued to visit on a regular basis and began to pick up on this exciting way of 'doing' church and community. We also began looking for a church in Australia that came somewhat close to what we had experienced at JoshGen. By now we had moved to South Australia, and William was travelling around globally with Four12 (which was birthed as an apostolic ministry from JoshGen).

In 2014 we went to the Four12 Conference in South Africa, and we were radically transformed in this wonderful environment of "24-7" church. At this same time, we had a chance meeting with

Andrew Selley, and later with Mike Davies, who encouraged us to attend the first ever Four12 Church Planters training in 2015 in Cape Town, which we did.

On returning to Australia, we started to pray about our next step, believing we were to plant a Four12 partnering church in Australia. After a few weeks, God spoke to us:

'Psalm 32:8 says, 'I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go, I will guide you with my eye'.'

> It was not long before we were twelve and expecting a Four12 visit from William Marais to our church.

We felt we were to plant south of Adelaide at Christies Beach. In an amazing way, this was wonderfully confirmed through the incredibly fast sale of our house. We put our home on the market and it sold in about 5 weeks and off we went to Christies Beach, South Australia. We were 'two plus the Lord' – we did not know anyone in this new area! We called the church 'Freedom Life' and sent out 5000 leaflets, hired a hall, made banners and notice boards...alas with no positive responses. I realised that, in my enthusiasm, I (Terry) had not really sought the Lord to this extent, and had just expected people to appear.

Then, amazingly, Kathryn Vogt, a South African living near Christies Beach, contacted us. She was incredibly excited because she had experienced JoshGen in Cape Town and had been praying for years that a church like JoshGen would come to her town, and there we were. Kathryn had also told Martin Stockdale from Impact Church (a great church in the area) about JoshGen. So with Kathryn and her two girls, we were then 5 people meeting in our home. Then a wonderful couple, Ian & Kay, who had been missionaries, were looking for a church with apostolic oversight and they too joined us. It was not long before we were twelve and expecting a Four12 visit from William Marais to our church. We had a great time, and during the visit, William also met with Martin from Impact Church. Brad Verreynne (Oxygen Life Church) visited us soon after and he also met with Martin. God was clearly setting something in motion, although we didn't really know just what it was yet.

> Before William left, he proposed that Freedom Life merge with Impact. We submitted this... and felt that it was indeed God speaking.

In March 2017, William came again to visit us as a Four12 partnering church, and again spent time with Martin, and it was at this time that we were introduced to Martin and his wife, Carrie-

Ann. Before William left, he (as an apostolic voice speaking into our church) proposed that Freedom Life merge with Impact. We submitted this new unexpected change to God and felt that it was indeed God speaking. Our last meeting as Freedom Life was quite emotional, as it was the laying down of one dream to choose to embrace God's plan and 'new thing'. Even though we were all in agreement to join Impact, we were also going to miss the tight community and the real family we had become over the past year as we shared our lives in our small gathering.

Fast forward to today, where all of us have fitted in well at Impact. In 2017, Martin and Carrie travelled to Cape Town and attended the Four12 Conference in South Africa and were deeply impacted and enthused, and God continued to link hearts. We are so thankful that Impact has now become a Four12 partnering church and that we are under this same apostolic covering.

The leaders at Impact are amazing and so on fire for the things of God, and this together with apostolic covering we under is seeing us as a church moving from strength to strength. We recently were invited to join the eldership team at Impact and are so excited to be a part of this leadership family.

> From a 'chance' encounter 17 years ago...to Four12 now being represented in Australia – nothing is too impossible for our God!

God is so faithful when we laid down Freedom Life Church and the original plans we'd believed God had for us in Adelaide. He didn't leave us on our own – He brought us into the more He had for us. God's ways are often unexpected, but always, always good. Yes, laying down that young church plant was a sacrifice and took a real choice to trust God with our future, but was it worth it? Absolutely!

What an amazing God we serve. From a 'chance' encounter 17 years ago between a young married couple in Horsham, UK, and a pastor from South Africa, to Four12 now being represented in Australia – nothing is too impossible for our God!