



Press Release

19 December 2011

The *60 Minutes* program last night (December 18) presented an interview with the Pastor of Westboro Baptist Church in the United States. The segment featured some disturbing statements claiming that among other things, he hoped more Australians would be burnt in bushfires.

Neither Rev. Fred Phelps nor the Westboro Church are affiliated with the Baptist Churches Western Australia, the Baptist Union of Australia or the Baptist World Alliance, which represents over 100 million Christians. Fred Phelps and his church do not reflect or represent the view of Baptist churches in WA. It is unfortunate that the program did not make this important distinction.

Rev. Phelps has a sad history of making bizarre and extreme statements that do not reflect a Christian position. His comments on the bushfires are biblically and theologically invalid.

Western Australian Baptists were among the first to swing into action to support emergency services and communities most impacted by our recent bushfires in Margaret River. Within 24 hours of the start of the fires, Baptist Churches Western Australia launched a relief fund and called on all their churches to pray for the victims and emergency services personnel in these bushfires.

Please be assured of the love and compassion of all Baptists who wish to comfort those who have experienced tragedy and loss.

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