

MEDIA RELEASE



Exclusive Release

Date of Issue: 7/05/2018

JOIN US AT THE TABLE, WE HAVE PLENTY TO SHARE A MESSAGE FROM CONCERNED YOUNG AUSTRALIANS ON THE WEEK OF THE FEDERAL BUDGET

As the nation wakes on the morning after the federal budget is delivered, young adults from the advocacy group, Micah Australia, will be hosting a banquet on the front lawns of Parliament House to call for a fairer deal for the world's poor.

Tim Costello, Executive Director of Micah Australia said, "This inspiring group of young adults from across Australia is gathering to ask our nation one simple question - have we lost perspective?"

"We are so blessed in this nation but whether this blessing has made us more or less generous as a people is sadly very questionable."

"Post budget analysis centres on identifying who the 'winners' and 'losers' were. What we must all keep in perspective is that by virtue of being born in this great nation, or now calling it home, we have all won what I call the 'lucky lottery of life'.

"Those things critical for basic survival and flourishing – an education, access to healthcare, a roof over our head and food in the cupboard – are not something the vast majority of Australians have to think about on a daily basis, and for that we should be grateful and mindful of on a day such as this. "

The Micah Australia banquet aims to raise awareness about savage cuts to the Australian aid budget, which has been dealt successive blows over the past five years.

Despite strong economic growth in recent years and Australians being ranked the second wealthiest in the world in terms of assets, our aid spending is at its lowest ever level.

As a nation, Australia has fallen to 19th of 29 wealthy countries as a measure of our aid generosity. In 2013, we stood as the 13th most generous nation.

Come this budget, that pattern looks set to continue, if not get worse.

Matt Darvas, Campaign Director of Micah Australia said, "Australians should take great pride in the incredible difference Australian aid makes in the lives of the poorest.

"Our aid helps to educate girls in Afghanistan who are up against the Taliban, it unlocks clean water and healthcare in the Pacific. But if these incredible outcomes don't get you excited, then there are the pragmatic benefits Australian aid brings to our nation's own peace and security."

"These young adults will be gathered in Canberra because they've had a clear realisation about the blessed position we find ourselves in; simply because we've been born or live in Australia. With that blessing comes responsibility, and our banquet on the lawns of Parliament is to represent that we can do more. That we do have plenty to share."

Banquets were often used in the Bible to demonstrate the radical inclusivity, generosity and grace we are meant to demonstrate to our neighbours and to the poor.

This banquet will be no different, with young adult health workers, lawyers, comedians and tradespeople, gathered from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds and faith denominations, gathering to show their support and vision for a generous and compassionate nation.

The group will be joined over the morning by community and NGO leaders, journalists and politicians as they discuss together how the world's poor have fared in this budget and what can be done to advocate on their behalf.

Event Details:

Micah Australia and 80-100 young professionals from around Australia on the lawns of Parliament House.

Wednesday 9 May from 6:30am- 9am.

Available on the morning for filming will be:

- A Choir of Congolese refugees performing
- A young male adult, newly arrived from Syria
- Various community leaders and NGO leaders seated at the table

Available for interviews will be:

- Matt Darvas, Campaign Director from Micah Australia
- Tim Costello, Executive Director of Micah Australia will be in Uganda, but interviews can be pre-arranged
- Other young professionals from across Australia willing to share about their vision for a more compassion and generous Australia

There will be an opportunity for media presenters to take a place at the table and speak to those gathered.

Media Contact: Beck Wilesmith | 0403 569 773 | beck.wilesmith@micahaustralia.org

Micah Australia is a coalition of churches and Christian organisations raising a powerful voice for justice and a world free from poverty.

www.micahaustralia.org

