

# BREAD UPON THE WATER

*Forgive us our sins...*



## LOGLINE

Newlywed Bonnie thought she'd married into the perfect family until the return of their disgraced and now repentant church pastor reveals fault lines in their convictions and threatens to tear the family apart.

# SYNOPSIS

Pastor Arnold's church turned Bonnie's life around. In it, she found healing from her troubled past and met Micah Bailey, her future husband. Micah's dad Colin ran the church's soup kitchen, his mum Nora helped with the women's ministry, and his brother Nathaniel was studying at the church's college to be a missionary with his fiancé Meghan. For Bonnie, it all seemed too good to be real.

So when Pastor Arnold had an affair with Meghan and the two of them left the country, Bonnie's fairytale shattered. Bonnie and Micah now attend Colin's small house church, a reactionary group for people wounded by Arnold. They also help in Colin and Nora's new grassroots food bank. Nathaniel, heartbroken and disillusioned, abandoned his faith and turned to drugs.

With the Bailey's lives barely on a new equilibrium, Arnold has returned, seeking the family's forgiveness and opening a local homeless shelter for an interstate charity. Bonnie wants to pardon him but Colin refuses to accept that Arnold's contrition is genuine and sets out to expose Arnold as a fraud to his new employers. Micah initially supports his father and Bonnie finds herself caught between her love for the Baileys and her faith-based urge to forgive.





## CHARACTERS

### Bonnie (23)

Childhood for Bonnie felt like being trapped in a parental sparring match. When she met and fell in love with Micah, she couldn't believe that loving families like his existed. Startled by Colin's anger at Arnold's return, Bonnie begins to question the perceived perfection of her new life.

### Micah (24)

Offered a temp job by one of the elders at Arnold's old church, Micah keeps it secret from his strong-willed father. His new boss's influence soon has Micah seeing Arnold with fresh eyes. For the first time in his life, Micah considers stepping out of Colin's shadow... and it terrifies him.

### Colin (54)

When he found God in his 30s, Colin channelled his gift of fixing things into fixing broken people, but after the scandal, he watched his son Nathaniel spiral out of control and out of his life. Colin knew where to lay the blame – he won't allow Arnold to bring such pain to other families.

### Arnold (32)

The son of a celebrity pastor, Arnold followed his father's footsteps into the pulpit of his own church. His bold vision and charisma led to spectacular growth, undone in a heartbeat when his moral failings were exposed. He lost his family and ministry but claims his time in the wilderness has deepened his faith. And so he's come back, saying that he wants to make restitution.





## THEMES

What principles are we prepared to compromise to keep the peace? And how genuine is that peace when past wounds are taboo and skeletons are left to rattle in their closets? Bonnie and Micah grapple with the need to fully leave Colin and Nora's protective but stifling nest to mature in their own faith and relationship. Can they do so without irrevocably breaking their familial bonds?

*Bread Upon the Water is a feature drama film that serves as a microcosm of our fractured society. What is the path to peace amid the world's misery and pain?*

## WHY THIS STORY?

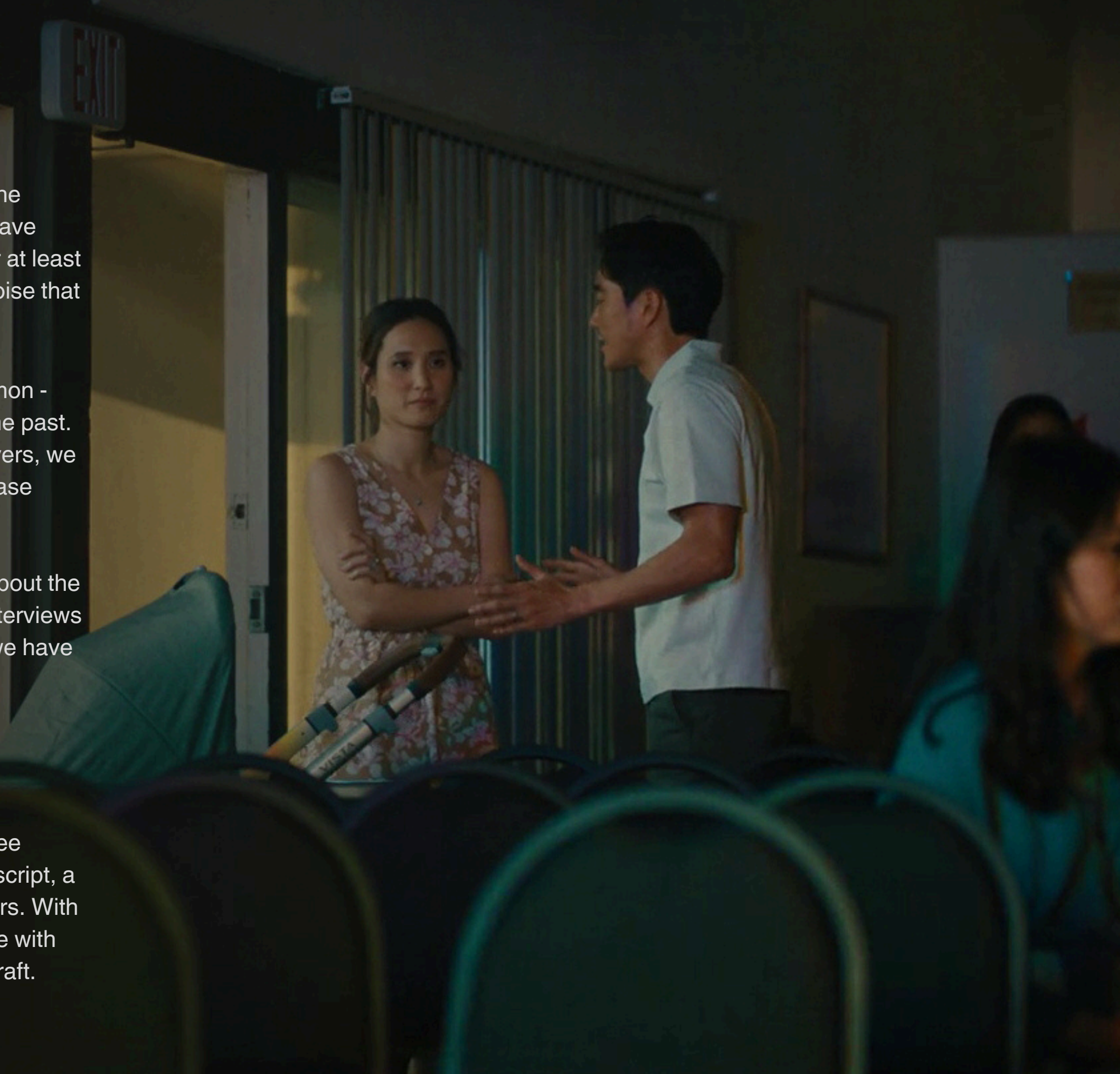
Stories of moral failure in the church are nothing new. It seems every day the media reports on yet another sexual or financial scandal. Many believers have experienced firsthand the sting of betrayal by their pastor or faith leader, or at least know people affected. So... why this film? Why now? Won't it add to the noise that already exists? *Isn't this just another Hillsong 'hit-piece'?*

'Bread Upon the Water' is being made by mature Christians - Luke and Simon - and intended for audiences hurt by the church. Not to revel in the pain of the past. Rather, we know that by focusing on a single family of 'de-churched' believers, we will dramatise with genuine empathy that healing is possible and what release from unforgiveness feels like.

Making low budget feature films is a labour of love. But we're passionate about the subject matter and are qualified to tell it. Drawing on dozens of research interviews and our own experiences as young people who had to define our values, we have found themes resonant for secular and religious viewers alike.

## WHAT'S THE NEXT STEP?

How will we accomplish this? Alfred Hitchcock famously said "There are three things you need to make a great film: the script, the script, the script." Our script, a blueprint for everything to follow, will demand months of work from its writers. With families to support, we (Luke and Simon) are aiming to raise \$30,000 in line with rates set by the AWG - Australian Writers Guild - to write a formative first draft.



# FOLLOW UPDATES

[lukewissell.com/soon](http://lukewissell.com/soon)

Password: film

## WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

Funds to write a script normally come through screen agencies like Screen Australia or the South Australian Film Corporation, but faith-friendly films are often overlooked. We want to see more faith stories made so we are reaching out to our friends and family in the Christian community for contributions towards the \$30,000 goal.

Would you be willing to meet over a coffee? Based in Adelaide (Luke) and Brisbane (Simon), we'd love to share some more about our film with you in person or online. Thank you for your godly consideration.

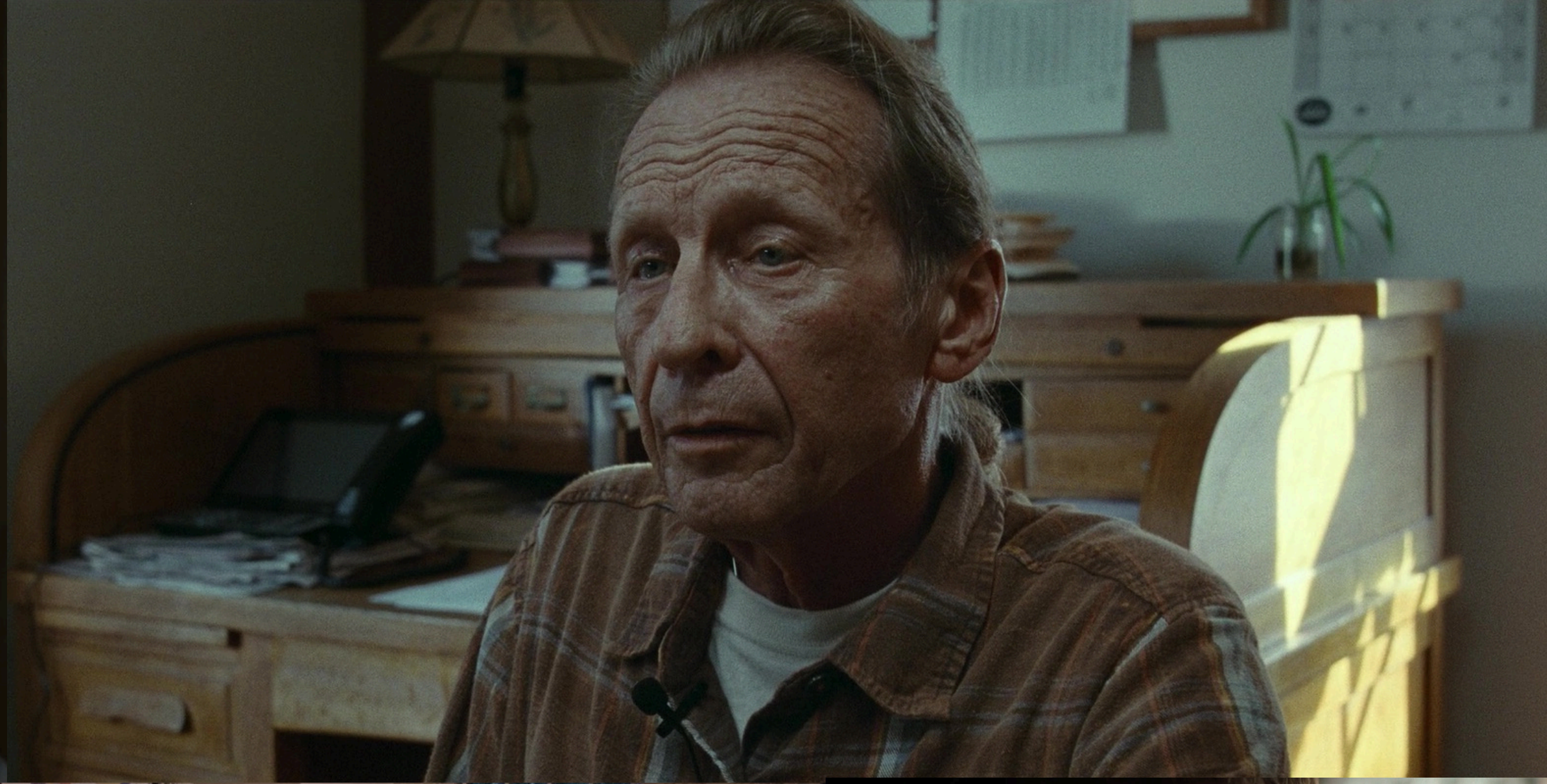
LIVING GLORY  
CHURCH

TO RAISE \$30,000

Luke Wissell  
ING BANK  
BSB: 923100  
Acc: 818907544  
Ref: film fund



MOOD



MOOD



# THE TEAM

A masters graduate of Melbourne Uni's filmmaking program, Luke has a passion for telling grounded, real-world stories with cinematic flair.

His award winning short films display a compassion for everyday people and nuanced execution. They have screened at Flickerfest, Gold Coast Film Festival, Adelaide Film Festival, and international fests like Manchester and In The Palace. Luke's short 'A Stone's Throw' was supported by the SA Film Corporation and the Adelaide Film Festival Premiere Fund.

Luke wrote for the AACTA nominated feature documentary 'The Last Daughter' (Netflix) and script supervised hit horror film 'Talk to Me'. Alongside co-writer Simon Kennedy, Luke is developing 'Bread Upon the Water', a psychological drama in the vein of 'Ordinary People' and 'Women Talking'.



**LUKE WISELL**  
DIRECTOR & CO-WRITER

Simon is the co-creator of 'Safe Harbour', an International Emmy winning TV series that put refugee issues in the context of a psychological thriller. It screened on BBC, Hulu, and SBS.

His latest credit was as one the writers on NITV's Logie winning feature documentary 'Incarceration Nation'. He also directs, produces, and stars in Songs with Simon, a YouTube channel of kids' songs that has 640 million views and 1.3 million subscribers.

Before becoming a screenwriter, he was a physiotherapist, managed and performed in a rock band, and had stints as a youth and worship pastor. He saw his fair share of brokenness and pain in all these roles but also saw many cases of healing and restoration. The stories he now tells tend to reflect life's complexities while exploring pathways to redemption and hope.



**SIMON KENNEDY**  
CO-WRITER