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Robe at City Life Church Melbourne

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City Life is a non denominational Pentecostal church and the largest church in Melbourne. It has a congregation of approximately 7,500 - and growing - 5000 of whom attend regular weekly services at the 1850 capacity main auditorium in Knox.

In addition to the services, a host of other events are staged at the Knox venue, including weddings, funerals, youth events and local school theatre productions. The main auditorium is utilised every day for a wide variety of performances that can feature anything from a single preacher to full choirs, orchestras and electric or acoustic bands.

The Church's lighting director James Fielding specified the 4 Robe ColorSpot 575 ATs along with four ColorWash 575 ATs which are hung above the stage, and with a Robe Haze 400 FT hazer.

Photo caption: City Life Church, Melbourne lighting director, James Fielding

The sound and AV facilities were upgraded earlier in the year, and then came the turn of lighting - by which time they were regularly hiring in moving lights for their larger events and functions. At this stage, it made good financial as well as creative sense to make the investment.

The Church also broadcasts to over 30 countries around the world on Christian TV, and in addition to catering for good TV lighting, Fielding wanted to make the space as flexible and dynamic as possible with the upgrade. He was given a budget allocation and knew that he "Definitely needed pro fixtures", so started weighing up the options.

Although he was already very familiar with Robe, he looked at several other fixtures before coming to the conclusion that they were the best and most appropriate for the situation. He chose Robe for three principle reasons - competitive pricing, his own hands-on experience of seeing them in action and using them (when hired in), and because of the excellent support and backup he knew he would receive from Powa Audio, the local Robe agent who supplied the kit.

Fielding first come into contact with Robe's whilst working on a "Youth Alive" gig at the Rod Laver Arena for Powa Audio in 2006 which featured 70 units. He was very impressed with the brightness and range of effects, and on top of that, Powa Audio reported that they were very reliable.

This was a key factor as well, because the lights are used for at least 30 hours per week in the venue, and will sometimes be run continuously for 3 or 4 days during special events. He also thought they were the ideal size for the room, which is wide but has a relatively low headroom of just over 4 metres. In terms of features, he "loves" the colours in the 575s and also their quietness, which is often essential when working in a church environment. Having the moving lights in house has made a massive difference to the level of production values that City Life can offer for all its events "There's just so much more scope for being interesting" enthuses Fielding, who controls his Robes along with various generic lights from an Avolites Pearl 2008 console, which was also part of the upgrade. This along with the Robes was supplied to Powa Audio by ULA.





