

# CORAL COAST CHRISTIAN CHURCH



'Therefore, glorify the Lord in the east,  
...in the coastlands of the sea.' Isaiah 24:15

A Baptist Church Family



CHURCH CENTRE  
596 Windermere Road  
BARGARA 4670

Phone 4154 7220

Website: [www.coralcoastchurch.org](http://www.coralcoastchurch.org)

Email: [admin@coralcoast.org](mailto:admin@coralcoast.org)

**Sunday 10 October 2021**

9.30am

**Keith Stevenson**

QB Regional Minister for Wide Bay Burnett

*2 Corinthians 2:14-16*

*"Living Off the Scent of an Empty Vase"*

**Sunday 17 October 2021**

9.30am

**John Mansfield**

Queensland Church Relationships Manager –

Baptist World Aid Australia

*Micah 6:8*

*"A Better World for All"*

**Pastor:**

**Brian Robertson**

**0407 547 036**

**Elders:**

**Munya Clarence Bere**

**0429 389 076**

**Geoff Oakes**

**0409 891 802**

**Secretary:**

**Ken Meyer**

**0403 937 421**

**Treasurer:**

**Colin Stollery**

**0425 272 298**

# WELCOME

to the

## CORAL COAST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

If you are visiting with us today, we welcome you and invite you to sign our Visitor's Book. The restrooms are on the southern side of the hall, with entry off the veranda. There are baby-change facilities in the Toilet for People with Disabilities.

### Pastor Brian on Holiday

Pastor Brian is away on a brief holiday from Friday 8 October to Saturday 16 October.

### Thank You

We thank those who came along and helped at yesterday's working bee. Your efforts were much appreciated and it was good to get a number of jobs around the property completed.

### Checking-In on Sundays

The church has implemented the Queensland Government's Check-In-Queensland QR code system, for the listing of 'patrons' to the church buildings. This means that when you enter the church auditorium, hall, or office – on any day of the week – you are to log your attendance with the QR code. Coral Coast Men's Shed and Bubs'n'Kids have also set up the same system (and have adopted the same QR code as the church).

If you have not yet downloaded the Check-In-Queensland QR code app to your smart phone, please do so ... after all, you are now supposed to register your attendance using this app when you enter any indoor public space. If you do not have a smart phone, we will manually enter your details on an electronic device when you arrive on Sunday mornings and then submit that to Queensland Health's COVID-19 tracing section.

### Start-Time of Our Sunday Worship Services

Remember that our worship services are now commencing at 9.30am (rather than 10.00am). Please note this change in your diary, on your calendar, or in your electronic organiser.

### Guest Speaker Today

Our guest speaker at today's service is Pastor Keith Stevenson, who is the Queensland Baptists Regional Minister for the Wide Bay Burnett Region. Keith served as the Senior Pastor of Hervey Bay Baptist Church from 1988 to 2015, and has been retired for the last five-and-a-half years. Keith's message is entitled "Living Off the Scent of an Empty Vase", based on 2 *Corinthians 2:14-16*. Welcome this morning, Keith!



Keith Stevenson

### Special Members Meeting

At the request of the stewards, after our worship service today, there will be a brief Special Members' Meeting to consider an amendment to the Church Budget. All church members are asked to be in attendance.

### Combined Churches Service

There will be a Combined Churches Service at the Bundaberg Christian College Assembly Hall (234 Ashfield Road, Bundaberg) tonight, beginning at 6.00pm. This service, which is organised by the Bundaberg Ministers Association, will be an opportunity for churchgoers to join together to celebrate our oneness in Christ. The focus of the service will be to highlight the ministry of religious instruction in the State Schools of our district. The Bundaberg Christian College worship team will lead the worship, Pastor Brenda Bowie (a teacher at BCC and a children's ministry pastor at Heritage Christian Centre) will be the speaker, and an offering will be taken to support the Bundaberg Religious Instruction Cooperative.



Brenda Bowie

There will be a sausage sizzle from 5.00pm, and the one-hour-long service will begin at 6.00pm. Go along to share in worship and fellowship with other churchgoers.

## Women's Morning Tea

The first-Monday-of-the-month Women's Morning Tea will be held on Monday 11 October (deferred from last Monday because it was a public holiday) at the Windmill Bargara (12 See Street, Bargara), from 9.00am to 10.00am. The Windmill can cater for a group of up to twenty people, and Ros Loudon has made a booking for that number. Go along and share in a time of fellowship together. Speak with Ros Loudon on 41547747 or 0407 173969 for further information.

## "Forgiveness 70 X 7" Seminar

The Forgiveness 70 X 7 Seminar is a DVD teaching presentation by Dr Bruce Wilkinson, designed to enable participants to find peace through forgiving others and themselves. Dr Wilkinson is a renowned Bible teacher who formerly presented the Walk Thru the Bible teaching series. The Forgiveness 70 X 7 Seminar involves a total of eight teaching sessions, presented over two days (four teaching sessions per day).

Megan Kelly and Sharen Slater will be screening this DVD teaching seminar on Tuesday 12 October and Tuesday 19 October, from 9.00am to about 2.30pm both days. The venue will be our Church Hall. Participants are asked to bring their own Bible, a notebook, a pen, their own water-bottle, and a plate of food to share for lunch. Tea and coffee will be supplied. The cost of the workbook is \$10.00.

For further information or to register, please contact Megan Kelly on 0412 827028 or Sharen Slater on 0411 030166.

## Stewards' Meeting

The next Stewards' Meeting will be held on Wednesday 13 October (brought forward from the regular third-Monday-of-the-month), beginning at 7.00pm. If there are some matters you would like the stewards to discuss, please speak with Ken Meyer, our Church Secretary, on 0403 937421.

## Dinner and Social Games Night

On Friday 15 October, there will be a social Games Night in the Church Hall. There will be dinner beginning at 6.00pm (please bring food to be shared), and the cards and board games will begin at 7.00pm. All welcome!

## Guest Speaker Next Sunday

Our guest speaker next Sunday will be John Mansfield, the Queensland Church Relationships Manager for Baptist World Aid Australia. John has been with BWAA as a volunteer for eighteen years and been full-time since February 2020. He has been heavily involved with mission work over the years, predominantly in Africa, Turkey, and China. John's message is entitled "A Better World for All", based on *Micah 6:8*.



John Mansfield

## Church Mice



## **Wedding Congratulations**

As a church, we extend our congratulations to John Sergeev and Katharine Robertson who are being married at 2.30pm today at the Coolibah Downs Private Estate at Mount Nathan on the Gold Coast. Pastor Brian will be officiating. Sadly, because John's family live in NSW, they will be unable to attend the wedding.

We trust that John and Katharine will know the Lord's blessing and guidance as they begin their married lives together. If you would like to send a wedding card or gift, you can send it to 34 Bauhinia Street, Boyne Island, Qld, 4680.

## **Birthdays This Week**

No one in the church family has a birthday this week (as far as we know).

## **Secretary and Treasurer Appointed**

At their meeting on Monday 20 September, our church's stewards re-appointed Colin Stollery as Church Treasurer for the year. Subsequent to the meeting, Ken Meyer agreed to accept appointment as Church Secretary. Annette Hill will continue to serve as bookkeeper.

## **Seeking a New Children's Officer**

For many years, Fran McCulloch and Cherryl Johnston have been our church's volunteer Children's Officers, responsible for maintaining our compliance with the Queensland Government Blue Card system. Fran and Cherryl have kept all the paperwork up-to-date and ensured that everyone who has a Blue Card or a Blue Card Exemption knows when to renew with Blue Card Services.

However, now that the entire Blue Card system is online and our church now has its own unique online portal to manage our Blue Card compliance, Fran McCulloch thinks that she ought to step down from being one of our two Children's Officers. We are seeking another person – with computer skills and the ability to use an online portal – to join with Cherryl as one of our two Children's Officer. The person needs to hold a current Blue Card (or be able to acquire one). Please speak with Pastor Brian if you would be willing to volunteer.

## **Returning the Old Church Directory**

Now that you have received the new 2021 Church Directory, please return your copy of last year's Directory to the Church Office. The office staff can take these apart so that we can re-use plastic covers and spiral comb binders, and can shred the pages to protect the information contained in the booklet from inappropriate use. So, if you still have a copy of the 2020 Directory (or any earlier edition of the Church Directory), please remember to bring it with you next Sunday so that it can be 'recycled'.

## **Market Day Income**

Coral Coast Community Care Inc has reported that a total of \$2,202.30 was raised through the market day and garage sale on 25 September. Thank you to everyone who contributed items to sell and who worked on one of the stalls on the day.

## **Church Account Details**

If you would like to have your weekly or fortnightly offering directly debited from your bank account into the church account, you will need the following information –

BSB Number           704 913  
Account Number    400040010  
Account Name       Coral Coast Christian Church

Please reference you giving as "Offering" or "Tithe". Including your surname is optional.

## **Special Offering Envelopes for the Building Program**

Special offering envelopes – marked "Buying Bricks" – are available in a clear plastic rack on the wall in the foyer. These envelopes are to allow you to make donations to our church's building program, over and above your regular giving to our church.



## Mission News

### Baptist World Aid Australia “The Little Book of Big Hearted Gifts” for 2021-2022

Baptist World Aid Australia has released “The Little Book of Big Hearted Gifts” filled with suggestions for the support of BWAA projects around the world. Suggested gifts include –

- providing bars of soap and training Cambodian and Kenyan people in basic sanitation and personal hygiene (\$5.00)
- helping to prevent malaria in the Solomon Islands (\$10.00)
- providing communities in Nepal and Kenya with training in environmental protection techniques and planting trees to reduce erosion, provide cattle feed, and develop forests (\$10.00)
- arranging children’s arts and crafts experiences in Uganda so that children develop resilience, learn skills, become creative, and avoid child labour and child marriage (\$15.00 per session)
- providing blankets for refugee children in various locations (\$15.00 per blanket)
- supplying face masks, gloves, other protective equipment, and hand sanitiser to families and frontline healthcare workers in the midst of the pandemic (\$15.00 per package)
- training for Nepali and Kenyan families in chicken rearing and providing them with chickens (\$20.00)
- training poor families in Bangladesh and Nepal in establishing vegetable gardens, and supplying seeds to enable vegetable gardens to be planted (\$20.00)
- providing hives of bees in Nepal and training families in beekeeping (\$40.00 per bee hive)
- supplying goats for families in Nepal and Kenya (\$40.00 per goat)
- assisting in the provision of clean water (water filters, arsenic testing kits, borehole sinking, and pond building) in Bangladesh, Nepal, Kenya, and the Solomon Islands (\$50.00)
- training in pig breeding for families in Nepal and Cambodia and supplying piglets to allow for the establishment of pig farms (\$50.00)
- training and supporting birth attendants in Nepal, and educating new mothers on better health care (\$60.00)
- supplying disease-fighter packs (which combine the fresh water gift, the anti-malaria gift, and clean-hands bars-of-soap gift) (\$65.00 per pack)
- supplying family nutrition packs (which combine the vegetable gardens, goat, and chickens gifts) (\$70.00 per pack)
- establishing eco-friendly fish farms in rural Nepal and training families to farm fish for food and to sell in the markets (\$80.00 per fish pond)
- supplying farm animal packs (which combine the goat, piglets, and chickens gifts) (\$100.00 per pack)
- educating refugee children and ethnic minority children in Lebanon and Nepal (\$100.00)
- funding “Change-a-Child’s Life 3-in-1 Value Packs” (which combine back-to-school, arts and crafts, and clean water gifts) (\$150.00 per pack)
- helping to prevent child trafficking in Asia by creating safe centres where children can receive shelter, protection, education, opportunities for play, and health care (\$300.00)
- constructing flushing toilets and training in better sanitation in Nepal (\$500.00)
- constructing emergency shelters and providing emergency aid following natural disasters, especially so that people have safe places to live and sleep (\$1,500.00 per shelter)

If you would like to make an income-tax deductible purchase of one or more of these items, send your gift to BWAA, Locked Bag 2200, North Ryde, NSW, 1670, or telephone 1300 789991, or email [hello@baptistworldaid.org.au](mailto:hello@baptistworldaid.org.au). You can also view further details about these projects at the website [www.baptistworldaid.org.au/big-hearted-gifts](http://www.baptistworldaid.org.au/big-hearted-gifts). BWAA will supply you with Christmas cards that match each gift, so that you can advise your loved ones that a gift has been purchased on their behalf through BWAA.



## Social Issues in the News

### “Statism and Crises: Learning from 20<sup>th</sup> Century Germany”

This article was written by Bill Muehlenberg, a Melbourne-based social commentator and Christian blogger who writes at CultureWatch. This article was published online at CultureWatch on 15 October 2020, almost a year ago. Since then, the intrusion into personal freedoms in our country has become more intense.

*The more you study history, the more ominous our present times appear!*

*In the light of the corona crisis and how so many states in the West have resorted to draconian lockdown measures which have meant crippling restrictions on personal freedoms, civil liberties, and basic human rights, we need to look to history – and look to it really carefully.*

*Here in Victoria, Australia, where I happen to live, we have witnessed the most severe and longest-lasting lockdown measures of anywhere in the world. Various ‘Emergency Powers’ and the like have been run with, extended, or enacted, to give the government quite alarming powers over the lives of 6.5 million Victorians.*

*With the normal workings of Parliament effectively stymied, and dodgy deals done between the Labor government and a few Upper House “independents”, even more powers have been handed over to the state, including the ability to keep this ‘state of emergency’ going on and on with no clear end in sight.*

*And as any shrewd and power-hungry politician knows, part of the way you can gain ever greater power and control is to put forward various ambit claims. For example, [Premier] Andrews had wanted a full twelve-month extension of his emergency powers at first, but that was knocked back to six months.*

*And in his horrific Omnibus Bill he wanted to give carefully selected citizens the right to effectively become paramilitary forces with the power to arrest folks simply suspected of one day possibly committing a crime! That too was knocked back, but in both cases 98 per cent of what he wanted he has gotten. And of course he can say this was all done legally and democratically.*

*Well, not quite. Inquiries into his dodgy dealings are still under way, and it looks like various laws may have been broken or pushed aside along the way. We may yet – hopefully – see the Premier losing his job, and more appropriately, thrown in jail for among other things, the death of over 800 Victorians and the destruction of its economy.*

*So time will tell just how all of his grabs for power will turn out. Will he keep getting away with it, and keep taking more control of things, while he continues to whittle away the rights and freedoms of ordinary Victorians? Or will his day of reckoning finally come? Time will tell. But this is exactly why we need to be up on our understanding of history.*

*So let us reconsider the nation of Germany during last century. How did a civilised and democratic state turn into a cruel, murderous dictatorship? And what lessons, if any, can we learn from this today? While I and other critics of the Premier’s power grab are NOT saying we are in the same boat as Germany was in the early part of last century, it is not at all amiss to refresh our memories here.*

#### Timeline

Let me begin with a very brief timeline:

- Late 1918, early 1919 – Germany becomes a republic as Kaiser Wilhelm abdicates. The Weimar Republic lasts until 1933.
- 1919, September – German Workers’ Party (DAP) formed.
- 1920, February – DAP changes its name to National Socialist German Workers’ Party (NSDP – Nazis).
- 1921, July – Hitler becomes leader of the Nazis.



Bill Muehlenberg

- 1923, November – Hitler leads a coup attempt ... jailed for a year.
- 1928 – His party gets 0.8 million votes in the elections.
- 1930, September – His party gets 6.4 million votes (18.3%) in the Reichstag (Parliament) elections, winning 107 seats.
- 1933, January 30 – Nazi seizure of power. Von Hindenburg capitulates and appoints Hitler chancellor.
- 1933, February 27 – The Reichstag fire, which Hitler blamed on the Communists.
- 1933, February 28 – The Reichstag Fire Decree.
- 1933, March 5 – Federal elections held in Germany. The Nazis get 43.9% of the votes.
- 1933, March 23 – The Reichstag meets and passes the Enabling Act.
- 1933, April 1 – Government takes first official actions against the Jews.
- 1933, May 2 – Trade Unions are banned.
- 1933, July 14 – All political parties except the Nazis are banned.
- 1934, August 2 – President Hindenburg dies. Hitler combines the post of President and Chancellor and calls himself Führer.
- 1938, November 9-10 – Kristallnacht (The Night of Broken Glass), in which Jews, synagogues, and Jewish shops are attacked.
- 1939, September 1 – Hitler invades Poland.
- 1939, September 2 – World War II starts.
- 1945, April 30 – Hitler commits suicide.

Let me speak briefly to several laws mentioned above that were passed early on in 1933 allowing the Nazis to take on far more power and control. In February 28, the Law for the Protection of the People (also known as the Reichstag Fire Decree), was signed. Talk about a euphemism. As Article 1 of this stated:

Sections 114, 115, 117, 118, 123, 124, and 153 of the Constitution of the German Reich are suspended until further notice. Therefore, restrictions on personal liberty, on the right of free expression of opinion, including freedom of the press, on the right of assembly and the right of association, and violations of the privacy of postal, telegraphic, and telephonic communications, warrants for house searches, orders for confiscations, as well as restrictions on property, are also permissible beyond the legal limits otherwise prescribed.

And consider the March 23, 1933 'Enabling Act'. This helped pave the way for the full Nazi dictatorship. The Holocaust Encyclopaedia says this about it:

The Enabling Act allowed the Reich government to issue laws without the consent of Germany's parliament, laying the foundation for the complete Nazification of German society. The law was passed on March 23, 1933, and published the following day. Its full name was the "Law to Remedy the Distress of the People and the Reich".

The Law to Remedy the Distress of the People and the Reich is also known as the Enabling Act. Passed on March 23, 1933, and proclaimed the next day, it became the cornerstone of Adolf Hitler's dictatorship. The act allowed him to enact laws, including ones that violated the Weimar Constitution, without approval of either parliament or Reich President von Hindenburg.

And a German government discussion of the Acts says this:

The adoption of the Act on 23 March 1933 enabled Adolf Hitler's government to enact laws without the consent of the Reichstag, which continued to exist, or of the Reichstag and without the countersignature of the President of the Reich. These extensive powers also applied, almost without restriction, to constitutional amendments and to treaties with other states. The Act thus marked the final eclipse of the democratic state based on the rule of law and the abolition of parliamentary democracy. All the legislation of the National Socialist state was based on the Enabling Act. It served to centralise the public administration, the judiciary, the security apparatus and the armed forces in accordance with the 'Führer principle', to standardise political life in accordance with National Socialist

*principles (Gleichschaltung) by banning political parties and mass organisations and to abolish freedom of the press. The concentration of power in the hands of the government, and hence in the person of Adolf Hitler, sealed the transition to dictatorship. The Enabling Act was initially adopted for a four-year period but was extended in 1937, 1939 and 1943. It remained the basis of all legislation throughout the Nazi dictatorship and was finally abolished after the capitulation by Law No 1 of the Allied Control Council on 20 September 1945.*

*Notice that these were pushed through under the pretext of protecting the people and nation, and of keeping them safe. Under the guise of helping the people, what was really happening was the complete squashing of democratic rights and freedoms, and the establishment of a full-blown dictatorship under Hitler.*

*Early in 1933, Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi propaganda minister, wrote this in his diary: "It is almost like a dream ... a fairy tale ... The new [Third] Reich has been born. Fourteen years of work have been crowned with victory. The German revolution has begun!"*

*Let me appeal to one writer here. Erwin Lutzer offers us some important truths in his important 2010 book, When a Nation Forgets God: 7 Lessons We Must Learn from Nazi Germany*

*Laws reflect a nation's priorities, agenda, and values. In Nazi Germany, where religion was privatised and God was separated from government, not even natural law was recognised as having validity. When Hitler got the Reichstag to give him the power to make the laws, the laws he made were arbitrary, drafted to fulfil the goals of a totalitarian state. The Nazis proclaimed, "Hitler is the law!" As Goering put it, "The law and the will of the Fuehrer are one." Right and wrong were determined by Hitler and his cronies.*

*The Nuremberg Laws of September 15, 1935 deprived the Jews of German citizenship, confining them to the status of "subjects" ...*

*Then there were laws against treason. Treason was defined as anything that was contrary to the will and the purposes of the Reich. Criticism was treason; freedom of the press was treason; a failure to further the agenda of the Reich was treason. The Law of Moses was replaced by the law of a man – Hitler ...*

*In 1934, the People's Court was established to try acts of treason ...*

*The experience of Nazi Germany reminds us that whoever controls a nation's laws also controls a nation's agenda and its values.*

*I must recommend another key work by Lutzer: Hitler's Cross (Moody, 1995, 2012). These two books provide us with quite a bit of useful information about the rise of Hitler and the Nazis, as well as vitally imperative lessons we all need to learn today.*

*As I said, I am not saying that we are seeing exact parallels between what happened in Germany last century and what we see in far too many Western jurisdictions today because of government hysteria about, and overreaction to, COVID. But there are some ominous concerns here nonetheless.*

*Increasingly we see the rule of law and open and accountable government shrinking. In Victoria, we have Andrews and his gang of eight running the entire show, ignoring the wise advice and counsel of countless experts. And they include all those who have warned us about how dangerous these interminable lockdowns are and how they are causing far more harm than good.*

*But power corrupts, and the more political control you get, the more you want. So power-hungry leaders will refuse to listen to others, and will simply believe in the righteousness of their own cause and their own ways. I see this happening in Victoria and elsewhere. And because I know a little bit about history, this frightens me to death to be honest.*

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## **Wisdom for Life**

"An appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile, hoping it will eat him last."

Winston S Churchill

"Tolerance is the virtue of the man without convictions."

Gilbert K Chesterton



## **World News – Bangladesh**

### **Rohingya Christians in Bangladesh Said “O Lord, Please Forgive Our Persecutors”**

The tiny community of Rohingya Christians living in the Cox’s Bazar refugee camp in Bangladesh have endured multiple attacks by Rohingya Muslim mobs. One particularly severe attack on 27 January 2020 left one Christian missing presumed dead, and twelve seriously injured, including several children.

The attack was thought to be a backlash in the wake of UN Special Rapporteur Yanghee Lee’s statement on 23 January 2020, after her fact-finding mission raised specific concerns over anti-Christian persecution in the camp by a small number of Rohingya Muslims. “I also met with a group of Rohingya Christians who are in a most difficult position. They told me they were persecuted due to their religion by the Myanmar Government while they lived in Rakhine [Myanmar], and now they face hostility and violence from a small number of other camp residents. This worries me.” Yanghee Lee stated after her fact-finding visit to the camp.

In response, a Rohingya Christian leader posted a prayer for the attackers on Facebook. “O Lord, please forgive our persecutors,” he said. Recalling the stoning of Stephen, he added, “While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’ Then he fell on his knees and cried out, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them.’” (*Acts 7:59-60*).

The Christian families fled their homes, taking refuge at administrative offices in the camp, when the gangs of at least 100 extremists rampaged through the vulnerable Christian community, four days after the expert’s report was released. A Christian man suffered a head injury as the extremists pelted stones at a church roof. Knife attacks and the use of acid and attempted arson were also reported. The mob ransacked the church, removed Bibles and destroyed homes, making at least twenty families homeless. Camp security forces reportedly turned on the Christians, rather than protecting them, and beat several, leaving one man unconscious. They also confiscated mobile phones containing evidence of the attacks.

Extremist Islamist group, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA, formerly called Harakah al-Yaqin), which is active in the camps, was implicated in this surge of anti-Christian violence.

### **Increase in Number of Home Bible Study Groups in Bangladesh**

Christian radio ministries in Bangladesh have been seeing explosive growth in the number of radio home groups across the country. From the end of 2018 to the end of May 2019, the number of groups grew from 330 to 806, but by the end of 2020 the number had grown to 1,687. The home groups not only listen to the Bible teaching on radio but take radio kits to other groups where more people can hear and read the Word. In one district, forty people from fifteen families received Jesus Christ as Saviour and were subsequently baptised, primarily through listening to Christian teaching on radio.

### **An Unreached People Group in Bangladesh**

The Shaikh people of Bangladesh are among the world’s largest unreached people groups. There are no known Christians among them, but the gospel is now reaching them through solar-powered audio Scriptures.

Bangladesh is more open to Christian activity than most Muslim countries, but there are always Islamic pressures from Pakistan and other religious influences from immediate neighbours such as India (Hindu) and Myanmar (Buddhist).

### **Religious Extremist Attacks Increased in Bangladesh**

Although Muslim-majority Bangladesh is officially a secular democratic state with freedom of religion, Muslim militants keep agitating for the country to become a Muslim state. Christians and other non-Islamic minorities in Bangladesh found that Islamist extremist attacks against them increased while the COVID-19 pandemic was raging in the middle of 2020. In many cases, the Islamists blamed non-Muslims for the spread of the virus.

Of particular concern is the plight of the tiny minority of Rohingya Christians among the three-quarters of a million Rohingya Muslim refugees from Myanmar who now live in Bangladesh,

mainly in refugee camps along the Bangladeshi border with Myanmar.

### **Christians in Bangladesh Helping in COVID Battle**

Christians across Bangladesh are playing a big part in the response to COVID-19. There are about 280 Christian doctors and 4,000 Christian nurses currently working in Bangladesh. Churches in Bangladesh currently operate twenty hospitals and run seventy community clinics in rural areas. Christian charities are also at the forefront of the COVID-19 battle. Despite accounting for less than 0.5% in a Muslim-majority population, Christians are demonstrating they are a significant minority.

### **Massive Fire Destroyed Sections of Refugee Camp**

For decades, Rohingya, an ethnic Muslim minority group in Myanmar (which is a predominantly Buddhist country), have faced institutionalised discrimination, such as exclusionary citizenship laws. However what is often forgotten, and no doubt deliberately, is that there is a minority of Christians among the Rohingya people who suffer a double persecution – firstly by the Myanmar military, and then secondly by the Rohingya Muslims.

The Myanmar government launched a military campaign in 2017 that forced some 700,000 Rohingya people to flee. Human rights groups suspect the Myanmar government has committed genocide against the Rohingya, but officials deny the accusations. Many countries have issued sanctions against Burmese military officials and given aid to Rohingya refugees who have fled to nearby countries, mainly in Bangladesh.

Then, on 22 March 2021, a massive fire affected five sections of the huge and sprawling refugee camp in Bangladesh. The fire engulfed the tightly packed camp, killing eleven people and injuring 560. More than 10,000 shelters were completely destroyed, leaving 85,000 thousand people homeless. There were a large number of children reported missing and the total number of lives lost in the fire had yet to be determined. In addition to the lives lost, market shops, schools, a mosque, a hospital, and food centres were all destroyed. Many of the Rohingya Christian families lost their shelters and few possessions in the fire.



Bangladeshi police subsequently arrested and charged several Bangladeshi youths for starting the fire. There was a feeling among the local community that the fire was started with the intention of driving out the Rohingya.

The Rohingya Christians often find they are left out when humanitarian aid from NGOs (Non-governmental Organisations) is given out. The international aid agencies use Rohingya Muslims to organise aid distribution – the result is that Christians receive nothing. So, on top of the persecution and the devastating effects of COVID-19 in the vast and crowded refugee camp, the fire on Monday 22 March resulted in severe hardship for the Rohingya Christians. Barnabas Fund has been helping the Christian families who lost everything in the fire, providing food, clothes, and shelter for these vulnerable and forgotten believers. BF is providing clothes and emergency food packs of rice, lentils, potatoes, fish, eggs, onions, garlic, ginger, cooking oil, salt and sugar. BF will also fund new houses for the homeless families, a little more robust than burnt ones.

### **Christians Forced to Flee Attacks from Buddhist Extremists**

The inhabitants of Suandrapara, a Christian village in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh, were forced to flee after suffering threats and attacks from Buddhist radicals.

The villagers, who converted from Buddhism about sixteen years ago, were attacked after they refused to demolish their church building and re-convert. The Buddhists attacked members of the church and their building, breaking a cross and tearing down part of a wall.

The assistant pastor, Tubel Chakma Poran Adetion, explained, “The radicals told us to destroy the church, but we will not. If we have to sacrifice our lives, we will. They threaten us to return to our old religion, but we will not return. Jesus Christ is our Saviour. We will die for Him.”

Bangladesh is overwhelmingly Muslim, but there are some Buddhist people in the hill country adjoining neighbouring Myanmar. It would seem that some of these Buddhists can be as hostile toward Christians as some Muslims!

### **Burial of a Christian Denied after Muslims Protested**

On 13 September 2021, it was reported that the body of a Rohingya Christian refugee was left without burial for thirty hours because of a protest by Rohingya Muslims, who form the majority of people at the sprawling Cox’s Bazar refugee camp in Bangladesh.

For many years, Muslims have allowed Christians to be buried in the Kutupalong camp. However, this time, they refused to grant the burial of Mohi Uddin, a Christian man who died of illness, and they formed a barrier to prevent the interment. “The camp manager and the UN staff tried to solve the problem, but couldn’t,” said a local Christian. “For the first time, we buried the body of a Rohingya Christian at another district due to the opposition of Muslims, even if for years the bodies of all the faithful were buried together.” Mohi Uddin was eventually interred at the Baptist Church of Patiya.

The isolated group of around sixty Rohingya Christians live among nearly one million mainly Muslim ethnic Rohingya who fled their homeland to escape genocide at the hands of the Myanmar military (Tatmadaw). In Cox’s Bazar, Christians are persecuted by an extremist minority among the Rohingya Muslim refugees.

### **YOUR CHURCH FAMILY BUSINESSES**

<p><b>Abitee</b>            Making sense of your business finances  <b>Annette Hill</b>          Bookkeeper and          Registered BAS Agent  <b>0408 798 965</b>  <b>www.abitee.com.au</b></p>	<p><b>Dr Rue Mobile Vet</b>  <b>At Home Pet Care</b>          consultations,          vaccinations, worming,          palliative care, pet euthanasia  <b>Rutendo Bere</b>          41520009          drruemobilevet@gmail.com</p>	<p><b>Allstarr’s Repairs</b>          For all those little repairs around the house  <b>carpentry, furniture, locks,          painting, welding, fencing</b>  <b>Wal Starr</b>          0499 009990  <b>allstarrs@internode.on.net</b></p>
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### **Australian News**

#### **Results of Polling into Religious Freedom Issues**

The Australian Christian Lobby commissioned Compass Polling to conduct a poll on 9 September 2021 of the views of Australians in relation to matters of religious freedom. The sample consisted of 1,003 people, who are representative of the Australian population on key demographics, as measured by the 2016 Census. Here is a brief summary of the results –

- Do you think people of faith should be legally protected from being discriminated against because of their faith and beliefs?  
 Yes 64%                      No 36%
- Should faith-based hospitals and religious health practitioners be forced to provide services, such as abortion and euthanasia, that conflict with their faith?  
 Yes 45%                      No 55%
- Should religious schools be forced to employ staff that are in conflict with the school’s statement of faith?  
 Yes 40%                      No 60%
- Should employers be able to restrict employees’ statements of religious belief, made on the employees own time?  
 Yes 29%                      No 71%

## Prayer Points

- Uphold the Rohingya Christians in prayer, especially as they struggle to hold on to their faith amid the persecution they experience from both their fellow Rohingyas (who are Muslims) and the Myanmar military (who are Buddhists). Pray particularly for Rohingya Christians in the refugee camps in Bangladesh, and pray for God's provision for those who lost their shanty houses and possessions in the massive fire in the camp on 22 March 2021.
- Thank God for the impact of radio ministry in Bangladesh, and pray that this method of proclaiming the gospel and teaching believers will continue to reap a harvest.
- Thank God too for the witness to God's love being proclaimed by the actions of Christian doctors and nurses in Bangladesh as they have been at the forefront of serving in the COVID pandemic.
- Pray again for the Lord to bring about the collapse of the dictatorial regime of President Kim Jong-un in North Korea and for the release of the hundreds of thousands of people (many of whom are Christians) from prison camps in that country. Pray that the gospel will continue to be proclaimed and North Koreans will continue to come to faith, despite the brutal treatment they receive.
- The civil war in Yemen is continuing, creating a massive humanitarian crisis with huge numbers of people succumbing to disease and starvation. Pray again for an end to the hostilities and for the distribution of international aid. Pray too that the horrors of Muslim-killing-Muslim will prompt many people to look for spiritual answers in the Person of Jesus Christ.
- Continue to uphold the Christian believers in Afghanistan in prayer, especially as they face the very real possibility of being executed by Taliban extremists.
- The West generally, and the USA specifically, has been humiliated by the chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan and the rapid collapse of the former Afghani government. Pray that this humiliation will cause Western leaders to grasp the need for Judeo-Christian spiritual and moral foundations to ensure social well-being and freedom.
- Keep praying that the Federal Attorney-General, Michaelia Cash, will bring forward a revised and improved version of the proposed legislation regarding safeguarding religious freedom in our country. Pray that this legislation will be passed through Parliament before the end of 2021, so that there will be an end to the increasing number of instances where people of faith face attacks and harassment for expressing their Bible-based views on marriage, family, gender, and sexuality.
- Thank God that the polling conducted for Australian Christian Lobby into religious freedom issues has revealed that most Australians want the rights of people of faith and faith-based institutions to be safeguarded. Even if most Australians do not practise a personal faith, they understand that others should have the freedom to do so without interference under anti-discrimination laws.
- Keep praying that the Victorian State Government will not implement its proposed legislation to force faith-based schools to employ staff members who do not hold to the schools' biblically-based ideas on faith, sexuality, and gender.
- With the numbers of people in our country being vaccinated against COVID-19 increasing, our governments are now wrestling with the issue of so-called 'vaccine passports' and the requirement of some employers to mandate vaccination for employees. Pray that the right balance can be found between public health and personal freedoms. Pray too that people who choose to not be vaccinated (or cannot be vaccinated because of other medical conditions) will not be maligned or discriminated against.
- Pray that BWAA will have a good response to their "The Little Book of Big Hearted Gifts", with many people in Baptist Churches across Australia taking up this opportunity to buy Christmas gifts on behalf of their family and friends by giving to needy people overseas.
- Pray for the ministry of Religious Instruction in the State Schools in our community as school resumes for Term 4. Pray that there will be sufficient RI presenters to cover all the classes, and pray that the ministry will have favour with school principals and with Education Queensland.
- Pray for the right people to step forward to fill the numerous school chaplaincy vacancies across the SU regions under Lisa Hardie's and Adam Hardie's areas of responsibility. Pray too for the success of the School Chaplaincy Support Breakfast being planned for Tuesday 2 November.