

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

Email: admin@coralcoast.org

Sunday 31 October 2021

9.30am

Steve Müller

Creation Ministries International

"How to Impact Our Evolution-Soaked Culture"

Sunday 7 November 2021

9.30am

Brian Robertson

Ephesians 6:10-12

"Finally, Be Strong"

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

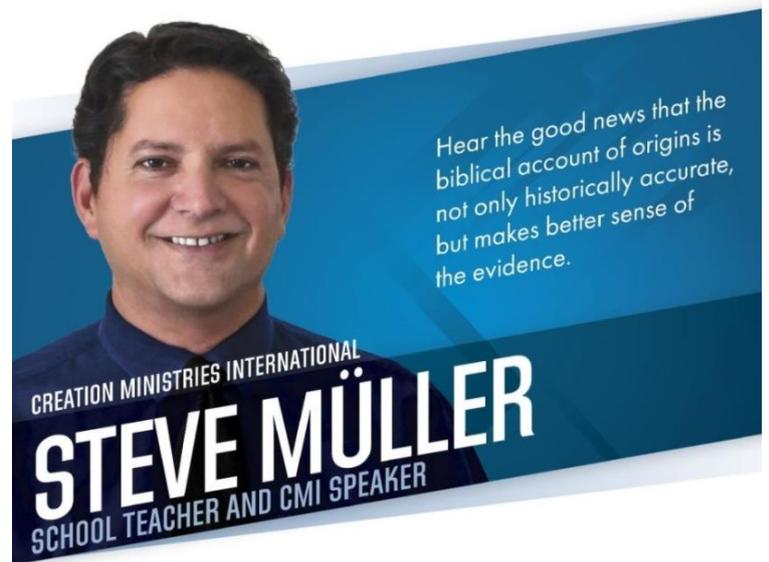
CORAL COAST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

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.

Creation Ministries International Presentation at Our Church

Why is there death and suffering in the world? Many reject God on the basis that He must be a cruel God to allow the terrible events and suffering that we see in the world today. Could you answer this? Find out how you can use this question, and more, as a powerful tool to reach others for Christ.

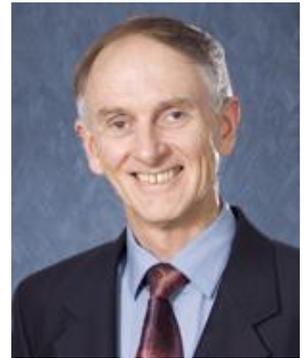
Discover the answers with Steve Müller when he brings his powerful message "How to Impact Our Evolution-Soaked Culture" on Sunday 31 October 2021. Steve is a high school teacher and a house-church pastor based in Gladstone, and he will be joining us for our 9.30am service today. Make sure you come along, and invite your unchurched friends!



Dr Don Batten Speaking Tonight

Dr Don Batten, Managing Director of CMI Australia, will be speaking tonight at Ann Street Gospel Chapel (60 Ann Street, Bundaberg), with the service beginning at 6.00pm. His topic will be "Creation: A Key to the Gospel".

If you would like to learn more about the biblically-based truth of creationism and its significance for a thoroughly consistent Christian worldview, plan to attend this evening's meeting at Ann Street Gospel Chapel.



Don Batten

Suffering Church Action and Awareness Week

Barnabas Fund has declared "Suffering Church Action and Awareness Week" in which to focus on the suffering church. During the week, Christian people are encouraged to be mindful of and prayerful about the plight of our fellow brothers and sisters in places where persecution abounds. While we sometimes face some difficulties here in our country because of our Christian faith, some of our brethren in other countries face great hardship and suffering.

This year, BF has produced a Daily Devotional Guide for Suffering Church Action and Awareness Week, entitled "God's Faithfulness in Times of Suffering". The booklet contains readings and prayers relevant to the persecuted church. We ordered a supply of these booklets and we are making a copy available for everyone today so that you can pray in an informed way during "Suffering Church Action and Awareness Week", which our church will highlight from today (Sunday 31 October) to Sunday 7 November.

Women's Morning Tea

The first-Monday-of-the-month Women's Morning Tea will be held on Monday 1 November 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.

'Hope-a-Float' School Chaplaincy Support Breakfast

On Tuesday 2 November, beginning at 6.30am at Rowers-on-the-River (2 Toonburra Street, Bundaberg), Scripture Union will be holding a fundraising Chaplaincy Support Breakfast. This event is for church-going people – rather than the Mayoral Chaplaincy Support Breakfast that is a community event, but which has been cancelled in both 2020 and 2021. Tickets cost \$40.00 per person, and places are limited to 200 people.

If you would like to attend this event and support our local school chaplains, tickets can be purchased online at <https://suqld.eventsair.com/hope-a-float-2021/register>. For further information, telephone Lisa Hardie on 0414 983353.

Church Birthday Sunday

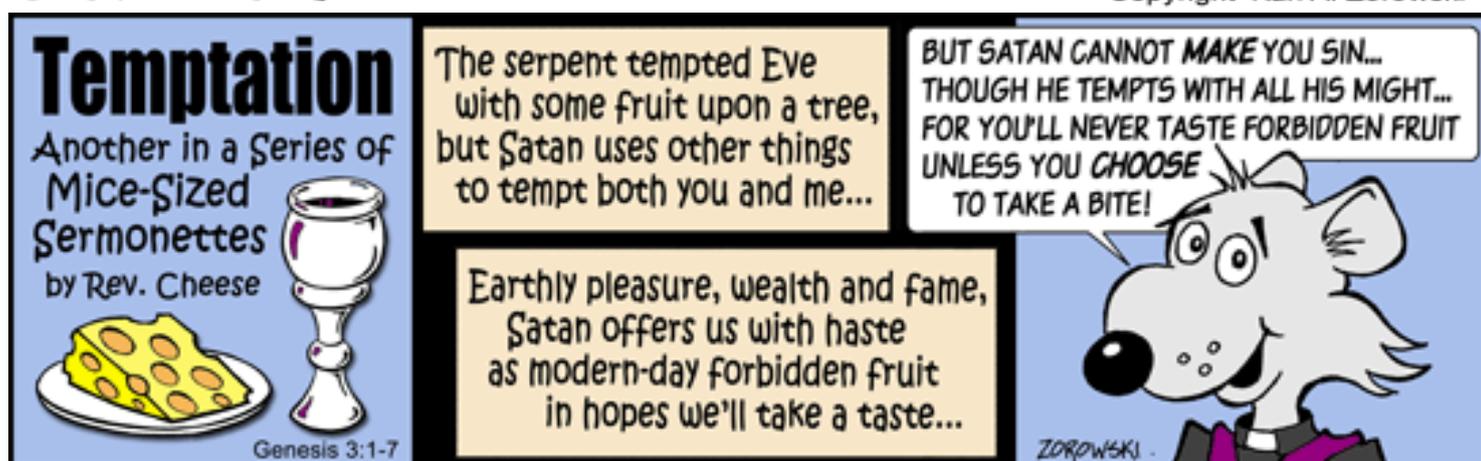
Our church celebrates its birthday on the first Sunday in November, in recognition that our church held its first service of worship on the first Sunday in November 1995. So, next Sunday (7 November), we celebrate our twenty-sixth birthday.

Church Birthday Lunch Next Sunday

After the service next Sunday, our church will hold a special lunch to celebrate our 26th Church Birthday. This will be an old-fashioned fellowship meal – everyone is asked to bring food for both main course and dessert to be shared – and will begin at about 11.00am. Please plan to stay and share in this occasion!

Church Mice

Copyright Karl A. Zorowski



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.

Birthdays This Week

Monday 1 November – Loretta Carr, Andrea McLaren

Church Morning Teas on Sundays

If you are willing to be a part of one of our four morning tea teams, please speak with Janine Maggacis on 0417 160965 and she will add you to a team. The teams of people provide food (including some gluten-free food items) and milk, put the cups, tea, coffee, milk, and sugar out on the table, and stack and unload the dishwasher afterwards.

The Morning Tea Roster

Sunday 31 October	Morning Tea Team – Sparrows
Sunday 7 November	Morning Tea Team – Eagles

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.

Date Claimer for 2022

Beginning at 9.00am on Tuesday 8 March 2022, Bubs'n'Kids is planning to hold a Fashion Parade. Please mark this date in your diaries and on your calendars, and plan to come.

The organisers will need people to volunteer as 'models' for the 'prestigious' clothing that will be on display. Male and female 'models', and child 'models' will be needed.

Please speak with Robbie Starr on 0477 014494 if you can help.

Financial Report from the Ecumenical Luncheon

The Bundaberg Ministers Association has advised that a total profit of \$2,369.90 was raised at the 18th Annual Ecumenical Luncheon on Saturday 4 September. These funds have been divided equally between Edon Place in Bundaberg and Domestic Abuse Recovery and Education (DARE) in Brisbane.

Total Offering at Combined Churches Service

The Bundaberg Ministers Association has advised that the offering collected at the Combined Churches Service on Sunday 10 October totalled \$1,751.45. The BMA decided to 'round up' the total to \$2,000.00 and a cheque for this amount has been sent to the Bundaberg Religious Instruction Cooperative to assist in the ministry of religious instruction in local State Schools.

Mission News

"Gifts of Eternal Impact" through the Bible League Australia

Bible League Australia has released its "Gifts of Eternal Impact" Catalogue for 2021.



- supplying Bibles in relevant languages for new believers in under-resourced churches around the world (\$10.00 each)
- supplying Bibles and Bible study notes for prisoners in Australian prisons (\$15.00 each set)
- supplying illustrated children's Bibles to children in Colombia (\$20.00 per Bible)
- funding children's Bible-based literacy programs in Nepal (\$20.00 per set of resources)
- supplying Bibles in Arabic for Christians (especially those from Muslim backgrounds) in countries in the Middle East (\$25.00 each)
- providing easy-to-read portions of the Old Testament and New Testament in simple English for people in Australian indigenous communities (\$25.00 per storybook)
- supplying Bibles for whole families living in slum areas in Indonesia (\$100.00 per set of Bibles)
- training church planters in rural areas of Zimbabwe (\$560.00 per trainee)

If you would like to give to one of these projects, post your gift to Bible League Australia, PO Box 714, Penrith, NSW, 2751, or telephone 1800 800937, or go to the website www.bl.org.au.

Samaritan's Purse Christmas 2021 Gift Catalogue

Samaritan's Purse has released its Christmas 2021 Gift Catalogue, with gifts such as –

- supplying a dozen baby chicks for poor families (\$8.00 per batch)
- providing kilojoule-dense food for malnourished infants (\$9.00 per child per week)
- 'adopting' unfunded Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes (\$10.00 each box)*
- giving copies of "The Greatest Journey" 12-lesson gospel and discipleship booklet to children (\$10.00 per booklet)*
- supplying starter hives of honey bees and training in bee management (\$20.00 per hive)
- empowering vulnerable women by teaching them trades, creating safe birthing places, enabling them to recover from trauma, and protecting them from human trafficking (\$30.00 per woman)
- helping Australian churches to support the homeless, migrants, and the elderly (\$50.00)
- training and equipping evangelists in developing countries (\$50.00 per person)*
- equipping poor farmers with tools, seeds and training to ensure they reap a fruitful harvest (\$55.00 per farming kit)
- teaching children in poor regional communities to read and write, thereby improving their opportunities in life and reducing the risk of being drawn into human trafficking (\$65.00 per child per year)
- providing specialised care for pregnant women and new-born babies by building birthing wards at clinics, providing prenatal nutrition and education, and offering other life-saving care for expectant mothers (\$75.00)
- funding clean water projects to bring water to communities that are stricken by drought, disaster or poverty – gifts can help rehabilitate broken wells, install rainwater storage systems, or dig water pans (\$75.00 each project)
- helping Australians affected by natural disasters (\$80.00)
- providing emergency medical care in various countries (\$100.00 per case)
- providing household BioSand water filters (\$100.00 each)
- providing clothing, food, medicine, and other essentials to refugee families living in refugee camps, war-torn areas, and disaster zones (\$125.00 per family)
- equipping entire classrooms in Cambodia with new study materials, educational games, technology for online learning, and more (\$150.00 per classroom)
- supplying disaster recovery kits to support people in the midst of natural disasters or war-time situations (\$200.00 per kit)
- supplying oxen, sheep, or other animals to families in need – along with veterinary services and small business training (\$350.00 per family)
- constructing wells to provide clean water for whole villages (\$10,000.00 per well – contributions in increments of \$20.00 gratefully received)
- establishing whole village schools in Cambodia by funding the supply of literacy toolkits, tablets and technology, as well as the training of teachers and principals (\$20,000.00 per school – contributions in increments of \$40.00 gratefully received)

To make a donation, contact Samaritan's Purse, PO Box 964, Kings Langley, NSW, 2147, go to the website www.samaritanpurse.org.au, or telephone 1300 884468.

Gifts to Samaritan's Purse marked with an * are not income tax deductible. All other gifts are income tax deductible.

If the gifts are purchased before 10 December 2021, SP is able to supply Christmas cards that match each gift, so that you can advise your loved ones that a gift has been purchased on their behalf through SP. Your loved ones get the cards, and people in developing countries get the gifts!



News from Christine Pheeny

Christine Pheeny, who is a kingdom worker at a university in Indonesia (and currently undertaking doctoral studies in Australia), sent us her latest newsletter on 10 October.

Dear Coral Coast Fellowship,

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16)

I was encouraged by the “Just as I am” story (below). I hope you will take a moment to read. In this e-news I’ll unpack a few of my musings related to it and some encouragement I received after passing it on!



Christine Pheeny

On 22 September in 1871, an elderly British lady, 82-years-young, was ushered into her heavenly reward. Earlier in her life, in 1835, her frustration at being an invalid left her feeling useless and questioning her very salvation. What she did next would echo through history.

As a young woman, Charlotte Elliot was not sure of her relationship with Christ, not sure of how to be saved, even though she had been raised a minister’s daughter, and the probing question of a Swiss evangelist, “Are you at peace with God?”, would not leave her mind. When she saw the evangelist a few weeks later, she mentioned that she could not shake his question. But, she protested, what could she possibly bring to God? When he replied that she need not bring anything but herself, she gladly accepted Christ.

Some twelve years later, in 1835, crippled by illness and constant fatigue, she felt saddened by her inability to help a local church’s cause. Remembering her conversion, she took out pen and paper and wrote a poem to encourage others who felt perhaps they too had nothing to give ...

*“Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
Oh, Lamb of God, I come ...”*

Her poem was published and she was inundated with requests for it. She was gladdened to discover later that some copies were being sold to raise money for the very cause she felt helpless to assist!

After her death, thousands of letters were found in her home, written by people whose lives had been transformed by her words. Her song has been translated into hundreds of languages, published in more than 1,600 hymnals, and has reached billions around the world, and continues to bring people to Christ even today.

Sixty years later, on this date, in 1931, a 31-year-old man riding in the sidecar of his brother’s motorcycle in England finally came to the end of his internal struggle against whether Christ was indeed the Son of God. He finally knew in his soul that indeed Jesus was just who He said He was! He realised that God calls us to Him “just as we are”. When C S Lewis stepped out of the sidecar, he was a new man, saved by grace!

Ninety-nine years after Charlotte Elliott penned her words, and three years after Lewis’ conversion, the 16-year-old son of a dairy farmer listened intently as he heard the message of salvation preached at a revival service in Charlotte, NC. When the song, “Just As I Am”, was sung at the end, young Billy Graham went forward to accept Christ.

Twenty years later, Billy Graham had become a successful evangelist and was invited to speak at Cambridge University in England. His nervousness over the event nearly led him to cancel it. But he was introduced to a kind man named C S Lewis who encouraged him to disregard the critics who had spoken out against him, and to continue with the revival. Rev Graham went on to speak to an overflow crowd of 2,000 each night of the revival, and when he returned to England in 1989, he addressed a crowd of 80,000 at England’s Wembley

Stadium! As always, he closed the event with the same song that brought him to Christ, "Just As I Am".

Never think you have "nothing" to bring to Jesus! That is exactly what He wants you to bring ... nothing! He wants you, just you, as you are! He can take frustration like Charlotte Elliot's, scepticism like Lewis', and nervousness like Billy Graham's, and reach the world through you!

*"Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."*

I read this story and my initial response was that's an encouraging story, I need to pass it on. I didn't initially pause to consider what encouragement it might offer to me, in my current happenings. After sending to a friend, I received back this reply – "That's a beautiful story Christine. Thanks for sharing. And even if we can't even write a famous poem, God loves us and delights in us. Praying you're at peace in this truth." With this response, I sensed I needed to seek the Lord for His peace in my thoughts and wrote in my journal ... (PS a measure of faith was applied to writing)

"Lord, I'm ok with giving my best and the working out of this task (thesis) being slow. I only really have my obedience and faith to offer. I realise that my love and obedience is what matters. Help me keep my eyes on You and be centred in Your value of me, not my inadequacies. I trust you are sufficient to overcome my inadequacies.

I will keep following Your lead, with You as the leader. It's not easy: to have uncertainty staring me in the face, to have timeframes set continually slip by; to work out positionality in academic world, BUT I trust You. Thank You that I can trust You to direct me and that You don't lead me astray. I trust You and am glad You are kind, patient, compassionate, slow to anger, generous. I look to You and trust I am learning these in You. I know You are teaching me much, especially on the development of my character, relationship with You, hearing Your voice, discerning enemies plans, all these being part of building your kingdom. Just as I am, Chris

In the thesis writing I have been working on the 'Theoretical Perspectives and Issues' chapter. At the moment, I'm at 20,000 words for this chapter ... giving explanations about a suitable overarching perspective for life that can guide education. I'm referencing other scholars work and applying logic and processing to show 'critical affinities and differences of value' (iron sharpens iron) to specify an integrated framework. In the midst of all, my sentences and paragraphs show the processing that clarifies issues with humanism and evolution ... It has been intense and a delight to have the Lord show me how to unravel the errors and divergences of human thinking, leaning on own understanding. Please continue to pray for me and this writing to come to completion and for God to receive much glory and eyes to be open to see Him.

I pray that each of you are encouraged too with the truth that God loves us just as we and wants us to come to Him with hearts to know Him more, His Peace, His Hope, His Delight and more!

PS Please know you are a special part of my life, thank you for your love, friendship, encouragement and support. You shine His love. Your overcoming of challenges encourages me; your perseverance is inspiring to all around you, whether you sense it at this time. I hope you will take some time to linger and remembering to come, just as you are, bold to the throne of grace ...

Preaching Healing and Deliverance,

Christine

Wisdom for Life

"Even if you're on the right track, if you just sit there you will get run over."

Issues of the Faith

“Biblical Creation Gives Us the Answer to Modern Insanity”

This article was written by Gary Bates (an author, the CEO of CMI-US, and a member of the editorial staff and a regular contributor to *Creation* magazine) and Lita Sanders (an author of several articles and books on the New Testament). This article was first published in a CMI newsletter in January 2020 and then published online by CMI on 15 September 2020.

A decade ago, who would have predicted the level of societal insanity that is currently gripping the world? Teenagers have become the apocalyptic prophets of climate change. There is an ever-growing number of gender identities being claimed for young children. Individuals and businesses are being persecuted for their non-conformity over LGBT issues. Unsurprisingly, depression, anxiety, and other mood disorders are at an all-time high. Maybe we think that we are safe within the walls of our church buildings and the insanity is only ‘out there’. But as Christians, we should be engaging the culture under the command of The Great Commission that Jesus gave us. Let’s first understand the real problem.

There Is Nothing New Under the Sun

As creationists, one of our favourite passages is Romans 1:20 where the Apostle Paul speaks about the witness of Creation being evidence for God. But many have not realised the link to immorality that he makes immediately after this verse. He notes that when people refuse to worship God, they don’t have the option not to worship at all. Instead, they turn to worshipping “the creature instead of the Creator” (Romans 1:25). We can see this in the emotive rhetoric of modern environmentalists. Their geolatrous (Earth-worshipping) religion even has a full-blown eschatology about the end of the world and the extinction of life as we know it.

Paul then says this idolatry leads to all kinds of sexual immorality (Romans 1:24-27). Even within recent living memory, everyone could agree that whatever stance we took regarding morality and sexuality, it was a debate for adults – children should be left out of it and just allowed to be, well, children. Now, (to give just one example) some parents are refusing to dress their children in blue or pink clothes until the child decides for ‘itself’ what ‘it’ wants to be. If confusing children about gender does not merit a ‘millstone’ (Matthew 18:6), then, what does?

Rejection of God Will Lead to Chaos

For a long time, Western civilization enjoyed the cultural benefits of a widespread commitment to biblical truth. Even if every individual was not a Christian, the government and leadership of society at least acknowledged the ideals of biblical morality and common sense prevailed, because there was a convention of moral boundaries. Now, a small but vocal minority of secularists in the media, entertainment, and academia have pushed their agenda on a brainwashed public. And ordinary families who do not allow their children to choose their own gender are tagged as unloving and intolerant. Such taunts clearly have Christians in their sights as they bring it to the doors of our churches.

But we cannot reject God’s truth and retain the benefits that come with it. Nor can we reject the theology and retain the anthropology. If God did not create us, we are not created in His image. And if we are not created male and female in His image, then what is humanity at all? And what Paul was really saying was if you reject the Creator, the consequence involves confusion at every other level. We are living at a time of serious decay. How long will the Creator tolerate this?

Creation Information Changes Lives

It would be easy to fall victim to the tendency of ‘doom and gloom’ of what is ultimately a perversion forced on society. But we should be encouraged that God’s Word remains true.



Gary Bates



Lita Sanders

Remember that there is “nothing new under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 1:9). Paul predicted this, and it is not taking God by surprise. And as such, His truth will always be victorious in the end.

While one can tackle the issues like the LGBT agenda head on, they are only the symptoms of a foundational problem – the rejection of a Creator. We know that questions about creation vs evolution are a huge stumbling block to faith today. But if we can show evidence that evolution is a flawed theory while also giving information that supports the Bible’s history, we will see changes. James H wrote:

“Creation Evangelism converted me to Christianity. I used to be ... a true zealot for evolution. I get your premise and agree 100% with your conclusions. This stuff will change hearts and minds. Thank you.”

God’s Word provides an anthropology that respects human dignity, including that of people struggling with their identity. Most importantly, it gives us the gospel, which is the only way people can be saved. By transforming lives one at a time, we cannot help but influence society back toward biblical truth.

Don’t Be Discouraged. The Bible Is True!

For over forty years, CMI has been producing information that strengthens the faith of believers by defending the Bible from the very first verse. Inevitably it makes people more confident to share their faith with others. We provide a wealth of free articles, tracts, and videos on creation.com because we want to help equip people with answers to the most-asked questions regarding creation and evolution.

“Biblical Creation Has the Answers!”

This article was the editorial at the introduction to *Creation* magazine in October 2020 [*Creation* 42(4), 6]. It was written by Dr Jonathan Sarfati, a CMI author and speaker.

We are certainly living in tumultuous times. Probably no-one born in the West after World War 2 remembers such problems. But the Bible always has the answer, while the secular world founders (Psalm 19:7-14, 2 Timothy 3:15-17).

Why Coronaviruses?

For example, why is a new coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) causing lots of disease (COVID-19 or C19) and death around the world? The answer: God created all things “very good” (Genesis 1:31). Death and disease entered the world only after the Fall, when our ancestor Adam sinned (Genesis 3:17-19, Romans 8:20-22). Therefore, God must have created viruses very good too!

Even today, most viruses are beneficial. A healthy human body probably has about ten times more viral cells than human cells! One epidemiologist said that if all viruses in the world disappeared, it would be nice for about 36 hours, then we would all die! But after the Fall, some viruses became harmful and even deadly – usually after escaping from the creature it was designed for. For example, both the C19 and Ebola viruses had a useful role in bats.

But evolution just tells us that human death is irrelevant in the universe. The virus is merely making copies of itself, and those it happens to kill in the process are just the unfit losers of natural selection. The Apostle of Atheopathy, Richard Dawkins, asserts that the evolutionary universe has “at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but pitiless indifference.”

Where Do Races Come From?

The other major problem today concerns ‘races’. But the Bible is clear: there is only one race: the descendants of Adam (Acts 17:26). The Bible says nothing about skin shade (we all have the same ‘colour’, melanin, just different amounts of it). All people were made in God’s image (Genesis 1:26-28). And all can be saved by Jesus Christ, our Kinsman-Redeemer (Isaiah 59:20). This is possible only because all people are blood relatives of Jesus, because we are like Him descended from Adam (Luke 3:23-38).



Jonathan Sarfati

But our 'educational' system pushes the evolutionary 'science' of Darwin. Yet he and his 19th and early 20th Century followers explicitly taught that the lighter-skinned 'races' were more evolved than the darker-skinned 'races', contra Scripture. Evolutionist and anti-racist Stephen Jay Gould (1941–2002) admitted:

"Biological arguments for racism may have been common before 1859, but they increased by orders of magnitude following the acceptance of evolutionary theory. ... In fact, they [Darwinian racists] often argued that their inegalitarian conclusions proved that hard science had triumphed over liberal or Christian sentimentalism."

Restoring the Foundations (Psalm 11:3)

Creation magazine for over forty years has been presenting the vital truth of creation, and destroying the harmful conjecture of evolution.

This issue has a timely article about an even more dangerous disease than C19 – smallpox (p. 48). We also interview a former cancer researcher (p. 16). Both diseases are examples of the perfect creation going wrong. But developing cures is following the example of Christ, who alleviated effects of the Curse.

Many doubt the Bible because of indoctrination into billions of years. But DNA in dinosaur bones could not have lasted millions of years (p. 15). And stalactites couldn't have taken millions of years to form, when they were inside a cellar (p. 12)!

From the biblical Creation-Fall model, we would expect creatures to have a perfect concept of design, even if now they are marred by the Fall. This time, we showcase flight (p. 36), teeth (p. 51), and design ideas from spiders and ants (p. 55).

Finally, at the beginning we talked about the misery resulting from the sin of the "first man Adam". But the Good News is that Jesus, "the last Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:45) was victorious over sin in His Resurrection (p. 20). Help share this Good News, and equip people to proclaim it, by passing this magazine along!

YOUR CHURCH FAMILY BUSINESSES

Bundaberg South Vet Clinic

67 Walla Street, Bundaberg South
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www.bundabergsouthvet.com.au
**Munya Clarence Bere
Rutendo Bere**

ACTIVE PHYSIOTHERAPY SOLUTIONS

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41510106
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41535865
sales@bundyit.com.au
www.bundyit.com.au
Wayne Barrett

World News – Afghanistan

A Comment from Australian Christian Lobby about Afghanistan

You've heard the news about Afghanistan being taken over by the Taliban – it's truly devastating.

Now, I know our own nation is currently in crisis in a different way. But this is one of those moments when we, as God's people, need to extend ourselves to intercede for others. So I'm asking you to pray for Afghanistan.

The speed at which the Taliban regained control after twenty years appears to have surprised everyone. Hope is vanishing, particularly for Afghan women, who have good reason to fear the future as they will bear the brunt of this takeover. History has taught us that. From 1996 to 2001, the Taliban controlled Afghanistan with strict Islamic law. Women and girls were required to cover most of their body, including their face. They were prohibited from driving, attending school, working or leaving their homes unless accompanied by a man. Already reports are emerging of 15-year-old girls being recruited to 'marry' the Taliban overlords. Christians in Afghanistan also face persecution and even death at the hands of the

Taliban.

In times like these, we must remember that prayer is the most powerful weapon we have against injustice. Please join me in praying fervently for the people of Afghanistan. Here are some prayer points to help direct your prayers –

- Pray for the people of Afghanistan who are frightened and need to know the Prince of Peace.
- Pray for our Christian brothers and sisters, for protection, peace and strength, and that they'll be a light in their community.
- Pray for our Prime Minister Scott Morrison as he considers Australia's response to the refugees needing a safe harbour.
- Pray for our Australian soldiers from the 3rd and 17th Brigades based in Townsville as they coordinate Australia's critical and dangerous evacuation mission.
- Pray for the Taliban, that the Holy Spirit would work to bring about conviction in their hearts and minds.
- Pray for those Australians who have served in Afghanistan over the past twenty years, many of whom returned home with physical and invisible scars and may be wondering why.

In the face of the unfolding tragedy, many of us may experience despair or great sadness. *Psalm 34:18* says, "The LORD is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." Let's bring our sadness to Him as we commit to pray for the people of Afghanistan.

Martyn Iles

Open Doors Called for Prayer for Afghanistan

The current conflict in Afghanistan means believers are more at risk than ever. But you can make a powerful difference. You can pray. Open Doors recently received brand new prayer requests for Afghanistan. Will you take a moment to pray over them today?

Pray for Local Partners

Our local partners are preparing to help those who have fled the country. Pray that the operation will run smoothly, and that the Lord will refresh the spirits of those workers.

Pray for Provision

Afghan health facilities are collapsing. Unemployment is high and millions are on the brink of starvation. Ask the Lord to provide for those struggling to survive.

Pray for Women

Women and girls are more vulnerable under Taliban rule. Some women are burning their degrees to hide proof of their education. Pray over their futures.

Pray for the Taliban

Ask the Lord to be working in the decision-making of those forming a new government. Pray He will reveal Himself to members of the Taliban and radically transform their hearts.

The Afghan Church Is Growing, Despite the Taliban

Before the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August, the nation was already the most dangerous country in the world for Christians to live, second only to the repressive dictatorship of North Korea. When the group seized control of the nation it had previously ruled with strict Shari'a law between 1996 and 2001, it was anticipated that the persecution would only grow and many in the West worked hard to evacuate Christians from the unstable region. Many followers of Christ, however, remain in the nation and many, amazingly, by choice.

We have heard many reports that the Afghan church is growing rapidly in the face of grave danger, and some say revival has come to the war-torn land. We serve a mighty God! "As Job says, in the *Book of Job* he says, 'When a man is in a heap on the ground, he stretches out his hand to God,' so it's in the midst of the desperation that souls are hungry, and so it's a moment of opportunity," Joel Richardson of Global Catalytic Ministries

(GCM) recently told *CBN News*. He explained that for the world's vulnerable Christians, even in the midst of persecutory regimes or violent Islamic insurgencies, many are experiencing revival. Afghanistan is no different. "Iran has the fastest growing church in the world. Seven years after the ISIS blitzkrieg, there's a revival in northern Syria ... the establishment of Islamic government provides ripe soil for the church to grow," he said. The Afghan church, he said, is "still actively meeting, studying the Scriptures together and sharing the gospel. We actually have a report from one of our leaders who has been sharing the gospel with Taliban members that came into their village and they've actually be engaging in Bible studies and prayer."

Mr Richardson explained that while some false stories have been circulating about the Afghan church, such as one errant report that the entire underground church had been martyred, the Christians who remain in the Taliban-controlled country are just ordinary people who have chosen to live out their faith. "They say they're scared. Many of them are in despair, but it's in that weakness that they're still pushing forward and they're finding sweetness in all of it," he explained. One of the prayers the Afghan church has is for divine, miraculous protection, such as Jesus' superhuman escape from an angry mob in *Luke 4:29-30*.

Taliban Carrying Out Mass Executions

Less than a month after the USA and its allies withdrew troops from Afghanistan and the Taliban seized control, the Taliban have started arresting, and in some instances executing, people they perceive as their enemies.

Recent photos and video suggest they are killing as many as thirty to forty people at a time, Christian missionary David Eubank, a former US Army Special Forces and Ranger officer, said in a media interview. The way the United States pulled out is "dishonourable, and a horrible breaking of promises ... and leaving thousands of people behind that we promised we'd take out with us including American citizens," Mr Eubank, who is from Free Burma Rangers and provides humanitarian services in war-torn areas, told *CBN News*. In some instances, the pull-out has been "cowardly," he continued, speaking from Tajikistan, which neighbours Afghanistan and where many Afghans are arriving after fleeing the Taliban. "They [the Taliban] are hunting down people right now, trying to get all the names of anyone they perceive as an enemy," Mr Eubank said, adding that the enemies include "people who work with the US government, people who are with other governments, people who work with non-governmental organisations they don't agree with."

Mr Eubank, who is in Tajikistan to help Afghans, also said that "many have been executed. ... I've seen recent photos of thirty to forty people [being executed]." He clarified that he doesn't know the scale of the killings or the arrests, "but I believe it's countrywide now". The Taliban are allowing American citizens who have identity cards to escape, he continued, adding that "anyone who doesn't have papers, anyone they perceive as an enemy, they are going to arrest them, and, in many cases, execute them." The people in Afghanistan "are in terror," Mr Eubank added.

The US-based persecution watchdog International Christian Concern warned recently that as the Taliban is cracking down on protests and journalists, concerns are also being raised among religious minorities of increased oppression and persecution because the Taliban have promised strict enforcement of Shari'a law. Almost all Afghan Christians – estimated to be between 8,000 and 12,000 – are converts from Islam and remain largely closeted and hidden from the public eye due to severe persecution. "Their status as converts makes Afghan Christians direct targets for persecution by both extremist groups and society in general," ICC reported. "In Afghanistan, leaving Islam is considered extremely shameful and converts can face dire consequences if their conversion is discovered."

Dangers Multiply for Afghan Christians under Taliban Rule

The small community of Christians in Afghanistan face multiple dangers following the Taliban takeover and withdrawal of US-led forces, Christian rights activists and observers say.

The lives of minority Christians have become more difficult than ever and they are bracing for increased persecution under Taliban rule, reported Mission News Network (MNN). “Prior to Taliban rule, Christians already had a very difficult time living out their faith,” the field director for Asia at US-based Open Doors, a global Christian group supporting persecuted Christians, told MNN. “They [Christians] had to keep it secret from their families for fear of being shunned, or worse, killed. Now that the Taliban is in power, their vulnerability increases tenfold.”

According to US-based International Christian Concern (ICC), Christians in Afghanistan are almost exclusively comprised of converts from Islam and are estimated to number 10,000 to 12,000. Due to persecution by extremist forces, Christians mostly live secluded lives hidden from the public eye. For extremist groups like the Taliban as well as the conservative Afghan society, denouncing Islam is considered a disgrace and converts can face dire consequences if their conversion is discovered, ICC says.

Following the Taliban takeover of Afghan capital Kabul on 15 August 2021, a Christian leader appealed to the country’s Christian community to keep a low profile and stay home to avoid being targeted by Taliban fighters. “Some known Christians are already receiving threatening phone calls,” the Christian leader told ICC. “In these phone calls, unknown people say, ‘We are coming for you.’” In a recent viral video, a tearful Afghan Christian pleaded with Christians across the globe not to forget the underground church and vowed to “continue God’s work” in the conflict-torn country.

Christian groups have not confirmed any targeted killing of Christians by the Taliban so far. However, Andrew Boyd, spokesman for Christian rights organisation Release International, claimed that the Taliban have been “searching door to door” for Christians and at least one Christian has been killed. “The Taliban have been checking phones to check if there are any Bibles downloaded onto their phones,” Mr Boyd told UK-based *GB News*. “We have a report that at least one Hazara has been killed as a result of this.”

Shoaib Ebadi, an Afghan-Canadian Christian and executive director of Square One World Media, told Voice of Martyrs Canada (VOMC) that most Christian believers are discovered because their family members report them. These relatives become “the first enemy” as they believe turning in Christian converts will cause their family members to return to the Islamic faith, said Mr Ebadi, who has family members in Afghanistan. Some media reports claimed that most foreign Christian leaders and workers have fled the country, while Afghan church leaders have received letters from the Taliban stating that their locations and activities are being closely monitored.

Amid all this bad news for Afghan Christians, Shoaib Ebadi says he sees “good news” for Christians despite the volatile situation. “The good news is that Afghan Christians are now leading these groups [small house church fellowships]. They are meeting in their homes, risking their lives every day ... taking God’s Word to the people of Afghanistan. And they are the ones sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with their neighbours, families and friends,” Mr Ebadi told VOMC.

Satellite TV ministry played a great role in spreading the gospel in Afghanistan. Christian ministry SAT-7 began broadcasting in 2002 in Farsi, the Persian dialect spoken in Iran, and in 2010 Shoaib Ebadi began its first pre-recorded programming in Dari, the Persian dialect spoken in Afghanistan. His show *Secrets of Life* went live in 2014, and today is accessible across the whole nation. The 55-year-old Shoaib Ebadi was born in Afghanistan but became a Christian in 1999 as a refugee in Pakistan. The following year he immigrated to Canada, and today heads Square One World Media.

Mr Ebadi said that probably about half of Afghan Christians are Hazara, then 30% Tajik and 20% Pashtun. The Hazara as a people are Shiites, and were persecuted under the different shahs and kings of Afghanistan. But the Shiite form of Islam also has a concept of sacrifice, of someone giving his life for another. So when they are introduced to the sacrifice of Jesus, the lights can go on. Hence, the Hazara people are more open to the gospel.

Australian News

Victoria Planning to Fully Decriminalise Prostitution

Following a recommendation from Fiona Patten MP (a Victorian Upper House parliamentarian representing the Reason Party, which was formerly called the Sex Party), the Andrews Government has announced they will move to decriminalise all forms of 'sex work' in Victoria. In effect, this will open the way for street prostitution and remove existing barriers to pimps and traffickers.

Australian Christian Lobby's (ACL) Victorian Coordinator, Jasmine Yuen said, "This is a backward step for the women, primarily, but also men, who have turned to prostitution because of poverty, homelessness, and isolation. If women really choose prostitution, as the pro-prostitution lobby claims, why is it mostly disadvantaged and marginalised women who do?" A 2004 Childwise study with young people under the age of 23 showed that 80% of young women involved in sex work had a history of child abuse. Every jurisdiction around the world where commercial sex has been decriminalised, including NSW, has experienced a surge in human trafficking, pimping, and other related criminal activity.

Referring to NSW's decriminalised model of prostitution legislation, the head of NSW's Police Sex Crimes Squad said in 2017, "Exploited overseas workers are slipping through the cracks because there is now no way to identify, or stop, underground brothels." This statement is a stark warning for Victorian MPs. Jasmine Yuen continued, "Victoria must learn from NSW's failed decriminalisation model. Their councils are now powerless to prevent illegal parlours opening anywhere, including near schools, learning centres, and residential areas."

"New South Wales Euthanasia Bill Hits Speedbump"

This article was written by Alex Schadenberg, executive director and international chair of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition. The article was published by MercatorNet (Sydney) on 19 October 2021.

The Australian state of New South Wales has just dodged a euthanasia bullet. It is the only state in the country where euthanasia is still illegal. An independent MP, Alex Greenwich, last week tabled a bill in the lower house to change that.

Euthanasia lobbyists have run a thoroughly professional campaign. A petition has been signed by 100,000 supporters. The bill is backed by a record 28 MPs, including members of the government, crossbench and the Labor opposition – which is said to be the highest number of co-sponsors to a bill in the history of any Australian parliament. Scores of doctors have signed a letter of support.

But today the euthanasia juggernaut suddenly ran – bang! – over a speed bump. And stopped! The government and the opposition have agreed to send it to the upper house for an inquiry. Its Law and Justice Committee must report back to the parliament on the first sitting day in February. The bill will then be debated in the upper house.

This by no means guarantees the failure of the bill. But the aura of inevitability has evaporated. The delay will give an opportunity for both sides of the debate to present their best arguments and evidence.

Perhaps this is the moment to recall an article written by the current NSW Premier (then-Treasurer), Dominic Perrottet, in 2017 in the Sydney Morning Herald [1 November 2017] opposing the legalisation of assisted suicide. You will notice that the Sydney Morning Herald peppered Perrottet's article with links to pro-assisted suicide stories. Nonetheless, Perrottet's 2017 article remains insightful in 2021.

Perrottet begins by commenting on how suicide news stories always include links to Australian suicide prevention organisations, such as: "Call Lifeline 131 114 or BeyondBlue 1300 224 636 or visit lifeline.org.au or beyondblue.org.au"

He then states:



Alex Schadenberg

“It’s a dark, stark dissonance, and a confronting illustration of former prime minister Paul Keating’s observation that, if we make assisted suicide legal, ‘there will be people whose lives we honour and those we believe are better off dead’...

“It’s got me wondering: if NSW or Victoria did cross that threshold, would news organisations continue to include the same potentially life-saving referral to suicide-prevention services in their reports? Or will that footnote need to be updated, with one message for those whose deaths the publishers wish to avert, and another for the people whose deaths they are happy to facilitate?”

“And what about the suicide prevention hotlines themselves? Will they screen out people whose wish to die sounds rational, and who may qualify under the relevant legislation, distinguishing them from the thousands of callers desperately seeking help to avoid the tragedy of suicide? Will those hotlines be asked to refer people who can legally end their own lives to places where they can get more information on how to go about it? Will the hotlines acquiesce in such requests?”

Perrottet then brought up the issue of medical mistakes:

“And what about mistakes? Our legal system prizes its cornerstone principle of ‘innocent until proven guilty’. The great jurist Lord Blackstone said, ‘Better that 10 guilty persons go free than that one innocent party suffer.’ And yet, despite this, innocent people go to jail. Lawyers, juries, judges, police and witnesses all make mistakes, because the fact is, no human system of safeguards is infallible.

“So with assisted suicide laws. Doctors will make mistakes. Victims will be pressured. Judgments will be clouded, and among all the arbitrary rules and safeguards, only one thing is absolutely certain: innocent people will die at the hands of these laws if they pass. At least the falsely imprisoned can be exonerated and freed years after the fact. For the innocent victims of assisted suicide laws there can be no long-awaited justice, just the silence of the grave.

“This is the dark, dangerous void of confusion and contradiction that we are steering our society into if we back these bills.”

He concluded his article by calling on legislators to oppose assisted suicide and support excellent end-of-life care.

“We need to help those among us suffering through their darkest hour, not push them deeper into the ultimate darkness.

We need more and better palliative care – something we have significantly boosted in this year’s NSW state budget, and something that as Treasurer I will continue to push as a matter of priority.

We must not create a two-tier society of the worst possible kind: where there are those whose lives we desperately work to preserve, and those to whom we really will be saying, ‘You are better off dead’. I will be voting against the NSW legislation, and I call on all people of goodwill here in NSW and in Victoria to consider these issues and make their voices heard.”

New South Wales is the only Australian state to not have legalised assisted suicide. I hope its MPs resist the “easy answer for people who want to avoid suffering” and defeat the “voluntary assisted dying” bill.

Australian Christian Lobby Planning to Distribute Gospels of Luke

The Australian Christian Lobby is planning to utilise its network of volunteers to distribute 500,000 copies of the *Gospel of Luke* (in a modern translation) to Australian homes during December. ACL has never distributed Scripture portions before, but believes that ordinary people in our country are hungry for answers to spiritual questions as the nation emerges from COVID lockdowns.

ACL has indicated that it will cost about \$1.00 per copy of the *Gospel of Luke*, and ACL is seeking both sponsors and distributors to get these portions of God’s Word into the homes of people across the country.

Prayer Points

- Thank God that the church in Afghanistan is still growing, despite the huge difficulties faced by Muslim-background believers in that country. Pray for God's protection over His people and for ongoing opportunities for the gospel to be proclaimed.
- Pray for an eye-opening and heart-changing move of God among the members of the Taliban, so that many – and especially those in positions of leadership – will come to faith in the true God.
- Continue to pray for the winding back of Pakistan's blasphemy laws, which are so often used to settle grudges against Christian people in Pakistan. Thank God that, despite a number of Christians on death row under charges of blasphemy, no one has been executed yet. Pray that these convictions will be overturned and that those who are imprisoned will be released and will be able to find places of safety to live and resume normal life.
- Continue to pray for an end to the decade-long civil war in Syria, for the restoration of stable government, and for true freedoms to be granted to Syria's people.
- Uphold our Christian brothers and sisters in Nigeria before the Lord, particularly those who live in the predominantly Muslim northern States. Pray for God's protective hand over their lives, and for His provision of food and shelter. Pray too for the persecutors – whether Boko Haram militants or Fulani herdsmen – to come under conviction and to turn away from their evil ways of destruction and violence.
- As world leaders gather in Glasgow for the COP26 climate conference this week (and expend huge amounts of fossil fuels to travel to the event where they will discuss how to curb fossil fuel usage), pray that our country will not commit to unrealistic climate goals. Pray that Prime Minister Scott Morrison and the Australian delegation will be able to clearly articulate that our nation is already achieving significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
- 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.
- Pray 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.
- Pray too that the Victorian State Government will not proceed to decriminalise prostitution.
- Be in prayer that the *Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021* in NSW will not pass through the NSW Parliament. Fortunately, it is a private member's bill (rather than a government-sponsored Bill).
- 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.
- Remember to pray for Christine Pheeney as she continues the process of writing her PhD, asking for clarity in thinking and fluency in writing.
- Pray that Samaritan's Purse Australia will be well supported with its Christmas Gift Catalogue. Ask God to supply the funds needed for SP to accomplish its ministry goals in 2022.
- Pray for our church's newly-formed Pastoral Search Committee as they begin the process of seeking a new Pastor. Ask for the Lord's clear guidance and for the Spirit to lead the Committee to the person of God's choosing. Pray too for His guidance for Brian and Caroline as they weigh up their next steps.
- Be in prayer about the Bargara Carols by Candlelight, as we seek business sponsorship to enable our church to present this event. Pray too for fine weather on the night of the Carols (and in the days leading up to the event) on 11 December.