

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 26 December 2021

9.30am

Brian Robertson

Luke 2:16-20

"Treasures in the Heart"

Sunday 2 January 2022

9.30am

AMPED Beach Mission Team

Pastor:

Brian Robertson

0407 547 036

Elders:

Munya Clarence Bere

0429 389 076

Darryl Kropp

0430 204 214

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.

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.

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.

The Final Amount in the Bibles for the Persecuted Campaign

A total of \$1,261.85 was donated by people in our church to the Bibles for the Persecuted Campaign (conducted by the Bible League Australia). Thank you to everyone who has contributed. Each \$7.00 will supply a Bible to a persecuted Christian somewhere in the world.



If you have not yet returned your cardboard moneybox with its \$42.00, please send your gift directly to the Bible League Australia, PO Box 714, Penrith, NSW, 2751 because our Church Bookkeeper has finalised the campaign and forwarded the money to the Bible League. You could, alternatively, hold on to the moneybox and its contents until November 2022 when we will again be partnering with the Bible League Australia in this campaign.

A Joyous Christmas

Whether you're here on Christmas Day or Boxing Day (or both), we wish you a joyous Christmas, filled with a sense of God's goodness and grace as you remember the gift of His Son at the first Christmas. We trust that you will enjoy the season's activities safely, and that you will resolve to put Jesus first in your life throughout the coming year. Merry Christmas!

Baptist World Aid Australia Christmas Appeal

Yesterday, we collected an offering for the Baptist World Aid Australia's "Hope for All Christmas Appeal" to support BWAA's work in providing emergency aid following natural disasters or wartime conflicts in developing countries in Asia and Africa.

If you were away on Christmas Day, and if you would still like to make a donation to the BWAA Christmas Appeal, you can put your gift in a specially-marked offering envelope and place it in today's offering. There are some spare envelopes in the plastic rack on the foyer wall ... just mark "BWAA" on the outside of the envelope.

Today, however, is the final opportunity to contribute to the BWAA Christmas Appeal. If you want a receipt to claim an income tax deduction, you will need to also write your details on the envelope.



Pastor Brian's Final Service

Today (Sunday 26 December 2021) is Pastor Brian's final service as the Senior Pastor of our church. We pray God's guidance and blessing on him and Caroline as they embark on the next season of their ministries.

Brian will officially be on holidays from lunchtime today until 26 March 2022.

Beach Mission in Bargara

Scripture Union Queensland will be conducting a Beach Mission – called AMPED Bargara – at Nielson Park in Bargara from Tuesday 28 December 2021 to Saturday 1 January 2022. Most of the team for this Mission will be coming from Brisbane, arriving on Monday 27 December, and camping in our church grounds, but there are some ‘spaces’ on the team for our church people to be involved. If you would be interested in being a part of the Beach Mission team for that week, contact Katie Woolston on 0431 665669 or email ktgirl6@gmail.com. And if you can assist in some practical ways (such as making food for morning teas), this would be much appreciated.



Happy New Year

Today, on the last Sunday of 2021, we wish you a Happy New Year for 2022! We hope that you will welcome in the New Year in a God-honouring way, and we wish you His blessing for the year ahead.

Church mice

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Birthdays This Week

Sunday 26 December – Nina Findlay

Monday 27 December – Isaac Duffin

Friday 31 December – George Nathan, Caroline Robertson

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 26 December | Morning Tea Team – Sparrows |
| Sunday 2 January | Morning Tea Team – Eagles |

Church Bulletins

Pastor Brian has been the ‘author’ of our weekly Church Bulletin for almost twenty years. Today’s Bulletin (26 December 2021) is his final edition.

Expression of Sympathy

As a church, we express our sympathies to the family of Jean Ballin (aged 95) who passed away at about 4.00pm on Friday 17 December 2021. Col and Jean Ballin had been foundation members of our church, and Jean had been involved in our church’s women’s ministry for many years. A private family-only funeral service for Jean was held on Wednesday 22 December at Branyan Gardens Crematorium, and a memorial service will be held at Bundaberg Church of Christ sometime in January or February.

Issues of the Faith

“Christmas: Yes, He Was One of Us”

This article was written by Bill Muehlenberg, a Christian social commentator based in Melbourne. The article was published online by *CultureWatch* on 24 December 2016.

Back in 1995 a song called “One of Us” became a big hit throughout much of the West. Performed by Joan Osborne, it asked this question: “What if God was one of us?” The first verse of the song runs as follows:

*If God had a name what would it be?
And would you call it to His face?
If you were faced with Him in all His glory
What would you ask if you had just one question?*

I must confess that I know nothing about her, nor the guy who wrote the song. Whether either one is a Christian is something someone else might be able to enlighten me on. But they were asking the right questions at least. In fact, there are few other questions as important as these.

There are two ways to address all this. On a popular and very well-known level there is Christmas of course. It is all about God becoming one of us. The birth of Jesus is part of the amazing story of God with us. While many in the West no longer see the connection between Christ and Christmas, it is certainly there.

Indeed, there would be no Christmas if there was no Christ. Yet so much of the West is intent on separating the two. As US President Ronald Reagan once remarked: “Christmas can be celebrated in the school room with pine trees, tinsel, and reindeers, but there must be no mention of the man whose birthday is being celebrated. One wonders how a teacher would answer if a student asked why it was called Christmas.”

The second way to address this is to look at it theologically. Christmas is really about the Incarnation. That is simply a Latin word meaning ‘in flesh’. God became flesh in the form of His Son. This is how John’s Gospel puts it (1:1-2, 14):

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. ... The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

God came in the flesh. He became one of us. So we no longer have to ask, “What if God was one of us?” We already know that He did. And He does have a name: Jesus Christ. And it is a good question indeed as to what you might ask Him if you met Him face to face.

But God has already taken the initiative in Christ, revealing who the Father is, and dealing with all the chief questions we can ever ask:

- *Who are we?*
- *Where did we come from?*
- *Why are we here?*
- *Why are we in such a mess?*
- *How can we get out of this mess?*
- *Where are we going?*

All that and more is answered by the Incarnation. The birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ tells us what we need to know. But more than simply answering nagging questions, Christ came so that we might be set free from our sin, escape the penalty of death which our sins have brought upon us, and restore us to a right relationship with the Father.

All that is terrific news indeed. That is the reason for the Incarnation. That is the reason for Christmas. That is the glorious truth we should remember and celebrate every year at this time. Nothing else can compare with the wondrous reality of the Incarnation. This is why we give gifts to one another, because God gave the greatest gift there is to us.



Bill Muehlenberg

There have been many great moments in history, such as the building of the Great Wall of China, the invention of the printing press, the painting of the Sistine Chapel, or the first man to walk on the moon. But the greatest event in history bar none was the Incarnation. Nothing compares to this. It is why 2000 years later we still celebrate that day a baby was born into very humble circumstances. It is the turning point of all of human history.

Let me finish by offering some stirring and beautiful quotes by various Christians throughout the ages about this wondrous event. May their words stir your hearts and spirits, and cause you to remember and appreciate the true meaning of Christmas.

So what if God was one of us? Here are some replies:

“He so loved us that for our sake He was made man in time, through Whom all times were made; was in the world less in years than His servants, though older than the world itself in His eternity; was made man, Who made man; was created of a mother, whom He created; was carried by hands which He formed; nursed at the breasts which He had filled; cried in the manger in wordless infancy, He the Word without Whom all human eloquence is mute.”

Augustine

“Maker of the sun, He is made under the sun. In the Father He remains, from His mother He goes forth. Creator of heaven and earth, He was born on earth under heaven. Unspeakably wise, He is wisely speechless. Filling the world, He lies in a manger. Ruler of the stars, He nurses at His mother’s bosom. He is both great in the nature of God, and small in the form of a servant.”

Augustine

“He lies in a manger, but contains the world. He feeds at the breast, but also feeds the angels. He is wrapped in swaddling clothes, but vests us with immortality. He found no place in the inn, but makes for Himself a temple in the hearts of believers. In order that weakness might become strong, strength became weak.”

Augustine

“The gaping chasm between God and human beings – which human reason has perceived and before which it has trembled – has been bridged by this infant’s merest yawn.”

Athanasius

Martin Luther wrote for his children at Christmas: *“What the globe could not enwrap / Nestled lies in Mary’s lap. / Just a baby, very wee, / Yet Lord of all the world is he.”*

“The greatest and most momentous fact which the history of the world records is the fact of Christ’s birth.”

Charles Spurgeon

“Infinite, and an infant. Eternal, and yet born of a woman. Almighty, and yet hanging on a woman’s breast. Supporting a universe, and yet needing to be carried in a mother’s arms. King of angels, and yet the reputed son of Joseph. Heir of all things, and yet the carpenter’s despised son. Oh, the wonder of Christmas.”

Charles Spurgeon

“Christmas is built upon a beautiful and intentional paradox; that the birth of the homeless should be celebrated in every home.”

G K Chesterton

“The exciting quality of Christmas rests on an ancient and admitted paradox. It rests upon the paradox that the power and centre of the whole universe may be found in some seemingly small matter, that the stars in their courses may move like a moving wheel around the neglected outhouse of an inn.”

G K Chesterton

“God descends to re-ascend. He comes down; down from the heights of absolute being into time and space, down into humanity ... down to the very roots and sea-bed of the Nature He has created. But He goes down to come up again and bring the ruined world up with Him. One has the picture of a strong man stooping lower and lower to get himself underneath some great complicated burden. He must stoop in order to lift, he must almost disappear under the load before he incredibly straightens his back and marches off with the whole mass swaying on his shoulders.”

Clive Staples Lewis

“The central miracle asserted by Christians is the Incarnation. . . . If the thing happened, it was the central event in the history of the earth.”
Clive Staples Lewis

“It is impossible to conceive how different things would have turned out if that birth had not happened whenever, wherever, however it did ... for millions of people who have lived since, the birth of Jesus made possible not just a new way of understanding life but a new way of living it. It is a truth that, for twenty centuries, there have been untold numbers of men and women who, in untold numbers of ways, have been so grasped by the child who was born, so caught up in the message He taught and the life He lived, that they have found themselves profoundly changed by their relationship with Him.”
Frederick Buechner

“Who can add to Christmas? The perfect motive is that God so loved the world. The perfect gift is that He gave His only Son. The only requirement is to believe in Him. The reward of faith is that you shall have everlasting life.”
Corrie Ten Boom

“The Almighty appeared on earth as a helpless human baby, needing to be fed and changed and taught to talk like any other child. The more you think about it, the more staggering it gets. Nothing in fiction is so fantastic as this truth of the Incarnation.”
James Innes Packer

“You can never truly enjoy Christmas until you can look up into the Father’s face and tell Him you have received His Christmas gift.”
John R Rice

YOUR CHURCH FAMILY BUSINESSES

Bundaberg South Vet Clinic

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Wayne Barrett

Christmas Poetry

Author Unknown

Jesus Was Born on Christmas

Jesus was born on Christmas,
On a very holy night,
And in the sky above Him,
Shone the very brightest light.

All of the heavenly angels,
Sang a song to praise His name.
They told the lowly shepherds,
So they left their sheep and came.

From the east the wise men roam,
Bringing precious gift to share.
Riches for the King of Kings,
To show the Saviour that they care.

Now we celebrate His birthday,
In our hearts and every day.
Jesus in your humble manger,
Your true love is here to stay.



World News – Croatia

Croatia's Religious Mix

Out of the total of 4,284,889 inhabitants of Croatia, evangelicals make up less than 0.3%, even though they are included in the group of "Protestant churches," which, according to the 2011 census, is 14,653 individuals (in comparison, 3,697,143 or 86% declared as Roman Catholics; 190,143 or 4.3% as Orthodox Christians; 62,977 or 1.5% as Muslims; and 12,961 as other Christians. The evangelical churches are ethnically mixed: they gather people of different origins and backgrounds to be reconciled under the cross, to worship together as a "wonderful sign of God's kingdom".

Croatian Parliament Considered Tightening Laws on Abortion

In January 2021, politicians in Croatia began procedures to introduce strong pro-life legislation that aimed to strengthen the protection of human life from conception.

The law in Croatia currently permits abortion up until 10 weeks' gestation and allows abortion after that point in limited circumstances. Croatia – which is a nominally Roman Catholic country – has a significant majority of people who are pro-life. Under the new proposals, abortion would be permitted only if a mother's life was in danger. Instead, under the new proposals, the focus would be on education, counselling, and prevention.

Political leaders from a number of party groups started gathering signatures on a petition to the parliament, needing at least thirty parliamentarians to sign for the matter to be included on parliament's agenda. The pro-life politicians appealed to all the lawmakers who had previously said they were pro-life to sign the petition. "Now we will see whether they care more about values or party discipline" Hrvoje Zekanovic said. "This is a chance for all those who call themselves Christian Democrats to prove that they are indeed prepared to protect human life from its conception. Now we will see whether they care more about values or party discipline, especially members of the (ruling) HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union) whose president is so afraid of raising this issue that he did not even honour the deadline which the Constitutional Court gave him a long time ago to change the law."

In 2017, Croatia's Constitutional Court ordered parliament to pass a new law on abortion within two years, which has not happened.

Young Persecuted Christians Granted Scholarships in Croatia

In June 2021, it was reported that Croatia's Ministry of Science and Education and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs had been inundated with 5,500 applications for scholarships set aside for young persecuted Christians from developing countries in Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

The Croatian Government had earmarked about \$245,000 (or €200,000) to enable young persons persecuted for their Christian faith to pursue undergraduate and graduate university studies in Croatia. The aim was that they will acquire knowledge and then return to their own countries better equipped to contribute to shaping their communities along democratic and tolerant lines.

This initiative was the result of an amendment to the state budget submitted by independent MP Marijana Petir that was accepted in November 2020. Ms Petir said that the right to freedom of religion was being violated in one in three countries, and that it was estimated that about 67% of the world population, or 5.2 billion people, live in countries where there are serious restrictions on religious freedom. She added that the number of applications for scholarships "exceeds all expectations".

In response to criticism of this help being allocated exclusively to Christian students, Ms Petir responded that "unfortunately, they are the most persecuted religious group in the world". She noted that in places where impoverished Christians are too poor to access tertiary education, many are offered scholarships by Islamic sources to study for free in Muslim-majority countries or at Islamic institutions; this results in many conversions of the brightest Christian-background men and women to Islam.

Prayer Points

- Pray that the evangelical churches in Croatia will continue to proclaim the gospel effectively among peoples of various ethnic backgrounds and demonstrate the oneness that is found in life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Thank God for the Croatian Government's willingness to fund university scholarships for persecuted Christians from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Pray that this initiative will result in well-educated young men and women making a difference in leadership positions in their home countries.
- Continue to pray that food shortages and famines in North Korea will be another 'straw' that will eventually result in the collapse of the dictatorial regime of Kim Jong-Un. Pray again for the Lord to bring about the collapse of this dictatorial regime for the release of the hundreds of thousands of people (many of whom are Christians) from prison camps in that country.
- Keep praying for the collapse of the Communist Government in China, for this regime continues to pursue policies that result in the persecution of ethnic minorities (like the Uyghur Muslims) and Christian peoples throughout China. Pray that a new government will emerge in China that allows people true religious freedom.
- There has been a build-up of Russian military forces on the border with Ukraine. Pray that Russia will not invade Ukraine – which is aligned with the West – and thereby prompt a more widespread conflict. Pray that Russian President Vladimir Putin will heed the warning from US President Joe Biden, and pray that the USA and other Western countries will honour their promises to Ukraine if Russia does 'cross the line'.
- Thank God for the safe release of the seventeen mission workers kidnapped in Haiti.
- During the Christmas season, attacks by Islamist extremists against Christians can increase in number in both Muslim-majority countries and in Western countries to which Muslim people have migrated. Pray for the authorities to be especially vigilant in protecting against Islamist extremism during the Christmas season.
- Thank God that new variant of COVID-19 – called Omicron – is proving to be less virulent and less life-endangering than initially thought, and pray that this strain of the virus will not result in renewed restrictions around the world.
- Pray for God's comfort for the family of Jean Ballin as they mourn her death.
- Pray too for Pastor Mark Riddell, and his children, as they mourn the death of Christine Riddell. Ask for an outpouring of God's grace over the Riddell family, and over Citicoast Church, as they come to terms with their grief.
- Pray for God's provision for Baptist World Aid Australia through the annual Christmas Appeal, so that BWAA can continue and expand its development and emergency relief work.
- Pray too for God's provision for Global Interaction – the Baptist overseas mission agency – so that GIA can expand its life-changing mission work in Asia and in Africa.
- Remember the work of Scripture Union Queensland in prayer, asking for God's provision of funds for the chaplaincy and camping programs, and for His guidance and blessing on Peter James and the SUQ leadership team. Pray too that SU will manage to find new chaplains to fill vacancies caused by the departure of a number of chaplains over the COVID vaccination mandate.
- Pray for the AMPED Beach Mission in Bargara, asking for effective ministry to the campers at Neilson Park in the final week of the year. Pray that the team members will work together well in presenting the children's, youth, and family activities.
- Begin to pray for Pastor Phillip and Linda to be able to quickly sell their house in Ipswich so that they can purchase a house in our area. Pray too that temporary accommodation can quickly be found for the Monteith family who will be arriving in our area on 7 or 8 January, but be in prayer that they will be able to find the right house to buy as soon as possible.
- Ask God to anoint Pastor Phillip and prepare him for his ministry within our church and into our community. Pray that he will quickly settle into the role, and have clear leading from the Lord as to the new directions and vision for our church.