

Westview Baptist Church

www.westview-baptists.info

“people learning to live Jesus’ way”

21st December 2014

We aim to be thankful, humble & enthusiastic disciples of Jesus in harmony with one another appreciating his ministry to enable us to be Christlike in serving others selflessly for his name’s sake.



“If Jesus Christ shares the nature of God, we are called to worship him without cessation, obey him without hesitation, love him without reservation and service him without interruption. To him be all glory for ever.” (Bruce Milne)

Transformed by Enjoying Christ

This will be the last bulletin till late January. We have had a full year with much change. Some of the change has been welcomed, others have come as a surprise, and some change we would have been happy to avoid. Throughout this year however, God has been working in and through us to bring about his purposes, which is wonderful for a group wishing to be servants of God.

We have been better off by having our aim before us, to be “thankful, humble & enthusiastic disciples” Although we may not have reached our aim perfectly at all times, we need to move towards that as a constant in our daily living.

As we move to our Christmas celebrations, may we be the one to prompt our friends and families to remember Jesus Christ the

Lord who has come into the world to save sinners. May we be the ones to point people to Jesus, for he truly is the Lord of all. May each one have a blessed Christmas and find rest over the New Year period.

Love and Service

Family News and Prayers

Last Thursday was a moving time as we celebrated Freddie's life. We do thank God for the gift he was to us and thank him for Freddie's life. Juliet will be flying to the Philippians immediately after Christmas for a family wedding and will be away for two weeks. We will keep her in our prayers.

During the following weeks until the end of January, we will commence our Summer Program. You will notice that the communion focus will be a bit longer and will be our main teaching. Our overall time together will be a bit shorter (approximately 45 minutes) and there will be no Sunday School. Over the first three weeks of January we will have Matt and Becky speak about their work in Arnhem land.

Our Christmas Day Service will be at 9.30am and will conclude soon after 10am to allow people to get to family functions. As is our practice, any undesignated giving through the box on Sunday will be donated to the Baptist World Aid Christmas appeal.

With the deck finally oiled, little change will be seen until Tim returns from Thailand when we will look at installing steps and a new doorway. Thanks for the people who have been involved to date. To date the deck has cost approximately \$6500.

There are new opportunities for people to volunteer for morning tea over the next few weeks. Please find the dates available on the noticeboard.

Thanks for those who are keeping the parking on the street immediately adjacent to the church building as well the space near the front door on the land available for those with mobility issues. Please give a friendly reminder to anyone who might forget.

Congratulations to Hayley who did very well in her HSC exams

achieving an ATAR (University entrance mark) greater than she needed for the course that she wants to pursue. Her name was listed in the Honours Roll in the paper last Thursday.

Don't forget to keep our YWAMers in your prayers - Tim, Sujin, Tabitha, Kaitlyn and Megan as they continue on their mission in India and South Africa.



Living Faithfully in Our World

Praying for the Persecuted

#48 Persecuted Country: Bangladesh

A secular country and its constitution gives freedom to all religions to practice their own faith. The country does not have blasphemy laws or an anti-conversion bill, but Islamic extremist groups try to push the government to modify the constitution. These Islamic groups use political means as strikes and rallies, and block infrastructure and kill people. Imams and local influential Muslims are in the frontline to persecute Christian believers, especially converts. Despite the fact that Bangladesh has a secular government, it is officially an Islamic state. This is also reflected in the country's constitution. Persecution is mainly targeted at MBBs as is reflected in the private, family and community sphere. Conversion is not forbidden by law, but pressure to recant the Christian faith will be exerted by family, friends and neighbours. Persecution in Bangladesh usually is not very violent. But in July 2013, Pastor Arun Kanti Chakma was killed in Khagrachori. At least five churches and two Bible literacy schools were destroyed, damaged or closed.

#49 Persecuted Country: Tanzania

At present, the main persecution affecting Christians in Tanzania is 'Islamic extremism'. Although the majority of Tanzania's population is Christian, recent years showed an increase of political Islam. The idea of a new Islamic state gains popularity among Muslims even on the mainland. Currently, a constitutional review process –which includes the position of the Islam in Tanzania, is underway.

#50 Persecuted Country: Niger

The main persecution dynamic in Niger is 'Islamic extremism'. In recent years the country has been gradually shaking off the characteristics of the typical West-African state with a (mostly) moderate Islam, constitutionally secular state. Now, there are indications that the government functioning in a secular state does not keep enough distance from Islamic religious leaders. Since 1991, dozens of Islamic associations have emerged, including Wahhabi groups. These organizations have been mostly concerned with the perceived erosion of Niger's religious identity by the secular democratic state. In many ways, Christians are being obstructed in the community sphere. The future for the Church in Niger seems worrying. The dynamic described in this persecution profile seems to point to a potential increase of pressure (squeeze) and plain violence (smash). A considerable part of the Southern third of the country seems prone to persistent Islamic hostilities.

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