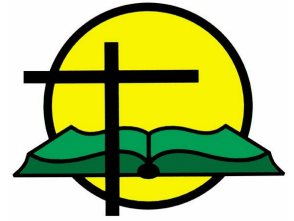


Westview Baptist Church



20th December 2015

Our purpose is to bring glory to God.

We will do this as we: Are transformed by enjoying Christ; Love by serving others; and proclaim Jesus by faithfully living in a fallen world

To follow Christ is to believe in a God who is the God of the impossible (Luke 1:39-80).

Time after time the scriptures tell of the miraculous acts of our God and the wonderful way he brings about his will and purposes. The combined and intertwined accounts of the birth of John the Baptist and Jesus once again reveal God's extraordinary ability to do things in a way so contrary to how we might expect them to happen. Two women at different stages of life – one older, probably thinking her chance to have a child has passed, the other young, full of optimism and considering her future – receive incredible visits from an angel bringing news that will change, not just their own lives but the course of human history. Is it even possible to consider how we would react to such an event?

But Luke records for us Mary's reaction to the good news in her song of praise to God and in her visit to her cousin, Elizabeth. Later he will tell us how Zechariah responds to the birth of his own son, John, following nine months of silence. Both poems speak in terms of praise and worship of God for his actions beyond simply the arrival of two babies. Both are full of thanks for God's provision of salvation for all humankind through the forgiveness of sins through faith in Mary's child Jesus, the Son of God. Jesus has come to instigate the kind of revolution we need, the kind that only the God of the impossible is capable of leading.

Family News

Countdown to Bible in a year! – Starting January 1st!

Are you ready? Do you have a plan? Electronic via the web and email www.oneyearbibleonline.com or smart phone or tablet app such as You Version, or the paper plan on the back table? Whatever your method, get ready now for the 1st January when we are going to read through the bible in one year (or if that is too much, there are other options like the New Testament).

Don't miss out on being ready for January 1!

For more information please speak to JJ or Lee.

The appointment of Josh Duncan at Blacktown Baptist & Our Celebration with them.

Through the help and support of Tony and Wendy in their first intentional interim ministry, Blacktown Baptist has now unanimously appointed to Josh Duncan to be called as their new Pastor. This is wonderful news for the local body, for us the wider body, and for Western Sydney. We have decided that we will join Blacktown Baptist on the 17th January as they welcome Josh and his family. *Please note that on January 17th there we will be joining with Blacktown Baptist at their church property (Cnr Sackville & Harold Streets, Blacktown), and there will be no service at our church hall. Further details about the day will be given over the coming weeks.

June Davies still recovering

Just a note to let people know that our dear sister June is still recovering from the clots she has been having in her lungs. It is hoped that the medication she is on will soon sort this out. She sends her love and does miss everyone. Please keep her and her recovering in your prayers. It is difficult time for her, and to not be able to join with the church family that she so loves (and who so love her) is not easy. Maybe you could send her a card or give her a call? Her details are in the church directory.

Scripture teachers and helpers – would you consider it?

Our state of NSW has unparalleled access to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in our local primary and public high schools through Scripture and lunch time groups. There is always a need for more Scripture teachers, there are always opportunities to either teach or help support those teaching through helping out with things like powerpoints or meeting the kids or chatting with them before and after the class or at lunch time groups. Next year there will be a lunch time group starting at Doonside High, we also desire and plan to continuing to teach Scripture at Crawford and Doonside primary schools weekly, and to help teach the Scripture seminars at Mitchell and Evans High schools, which are once a term at each school. Would you consider giving up a day a week, or a day a term to come in and help teach or support this work? There is training available and you would not be forced to do anything you are not comfortable doing. Please consider this wonderful opportunity, and for more speak to JJ. *Please continue to pray for these schools and the workers in these schools as kids hear the truth of Jesus. Thank you so much for your prayers & support in 2015!*

What's Coming Up?

Next Week's 2 Passage on Luke >

Luke 2:1-52 (Xmas) & Luke 3:1-4:15

Why not make some time during this coming week to have a read and think over this passage. If you ever have questions of the passage that aren't addressed on the morning service or any other questions please don't hesitate to speak to JJ or Lee.



Baptist World Aid Christ Appeal

As is our usual practice at Westview all gifts in the collection box on Christmas Day not marked for any other purpose, will be sent to Baptist World Aid. Any questions please speak to Allan.

Pray for our persecuted brothers and sisters

Country: Bangladesh **Leader:** President Abdul Hamid

Population: 160.4 million **Main Religion:** Islam

Government: Parliamentary Democracy

Main Source of Persecution: Islamic Extremism

Bangladesh continues to be a secular country and its constitution is giving freedom to all religions to practice their own faith. The country does not have blasphemy laws or an anti-conversion bill. On the other hand, the constitution also states that state religion is Islam and the government is known to give in to Islamic pressure from the streets, despite fighting the Islamic party by all means. Additionally, there are fatwas implemented all over the country, especially in rural areas. Several of the radical Islamic groups try to push the government to modify the constitution as they demand thirteen major changes. Among other things, they demand to establish the Sharia Islamic law, so that it becomes visible that the country belongs to the "House of Islam".

As the Christian minority is growing, it faces more and more restrictions and challenges. This is not driven by the government, as shown by the fact that the President, in July 2014, appointed a Catholic woman as her personal secretary. Pressure is driven by radical Islamic groups, local religious leaders, and families. The competition between the large political parties of the country is also an important factor, as the government may give in to demands from Islamic pressure groups, taking to the streets. Christian converts from Islam or Buddhism face strong pressure by their family, friends and neighbors to recant the Christian faith, though conversion is not forbidden by law. Christians are discriminated in their private lives as well as in their businesses. There were several reports that Christians had to give up their shops or other businesses due to the pressure by the Muslim majority. Children of converts are facing discrimination and bias by teachers and students in schools. Persecution in Bangladesh has become more violent over recent years.

Please Pray:

- > Praise God for ongoing training programs that Open Doors provides for Christian leaders
- > That the National Party will stop persecuting religious minorities in the country
- > That the government will not give into pressure from Islamic factions

Please pray for our brothers and sisters in Bangladesh



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