

March 2025



BELONGING PEOPLE



Dashwin, Joshua and Denzil - baptised at Lajamanu.



Exploring Mission?

“It is not so much the case that God has a mission for his church in the world, as that God has a church for his mission in the world. Mission was not made for the church- the church was made for mission-God’s mission.”

I love this quote from Christopher Wright. It reminds me that God asks us, his people to seek ways to engage in the privilege and responsibility of sharing the amazing news of the gospel with the community around us.

As we enter 2025, this may be something you are pondering for yourself or for your church. There are so many ways to be involved in God’s mission work. What are the opportunities you already have to serve and share in your own community and workplace? Does your church have community service or volunteer programs? Does your church sponsor work overseas or in Australia you could visit as part of a team?

An amazing program that Baptist Mission Australia has run for many years is our **Global Exposure trips**. These short (approx. two week), small group trips, (5 -10 people), allow participants to be immersed in an unfamiliar culture, experiencing life on one of our ministry fields



These trips are not so much about doing as they are about observing and experiencing. Each trip is unique with the team on the ground working to make your time interesting and valuable, experiencing how they invest and care for the communities God has placed them in. There is time also to explore, reflect and debrief as you go.

If this sounds like something your church, small group, young adult group or ministry team would like to be a part of follow this link to our website <https://baptistmissionaustralia.org/serve/short-term/global-exposure/> or get in touch with me for a chat (lcornish@baptistmissionaustralia.org) . **Let’s explore your opportunity to be part of God’s mission to the world.**

Lisa Cornish
State Director SA/Nt
Baptist Missions Australia

A Word In Season.....

In recent months, we've seen significant changes in both local and global governments. Many people have high hopes that a new government will fix the issues they disliked about the old one, but in reality, things often don't improve, and sometimes even get worse.

This highlights that, despite our wishes, governments (and we ourselves) aren't in control of everything. So much is beyond our grasp. But the Bible reminds us that God is still in control, even when we feel overwhelmed or discouraged by our leaders.

As Proverbs 16:9 says, *"In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps."* This is a comforting reminder that God is ultimately in charge.

We also believe that all governments are established by God. Romans 13:1 affirms, *"Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God."*

Ox Roberts
Senior Pastor
Darwin Baptist Church

This leads me to consider: How often am I praying for our leaders? If God knows who will be in power, shouldn't I pray more regularly for our elected officials at local, state (NT), and federal levels?

In 1 Timothy 2:1-4, Paul urges us to pray for those in authority: *"I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth."*

With the federal election approaching, I invite you to join me in praying regularly for our leaders at all levels of government. Let's pray that God would use them to fulfill His will and, ultimately, that they would come to know Him personally, as we do.





Young Men Baptised at Lajamanu

At the end of the old year, there was a new beginning for three young men baptised at Lajamanu. On Sunday 29th December, **Joshua Jarruh (10 years)**, **Denzil Tasman (15 years)** and **Dashwin White** followed Jesus through the waters of Baptism.

Church leader, Lynette Tasman has described how the Church folk gathered by Hooker Creek to witness the baptisms of these three young men. There was great joy that day to see them witness to their love and obedience to Jesus as their Saviour. Following the baptisms, everyone shared in communion by the creek.

Please pray that Joshua, Denzil and Dashwin will grow in their love and knowledge of Wapirra and be a witness to other young people in their community. May they be strengthened by the Holy Spirit to stand firm, resist temptations and grow in their faith. Pray for the Church family at Lajamanu as they guide and teach them.

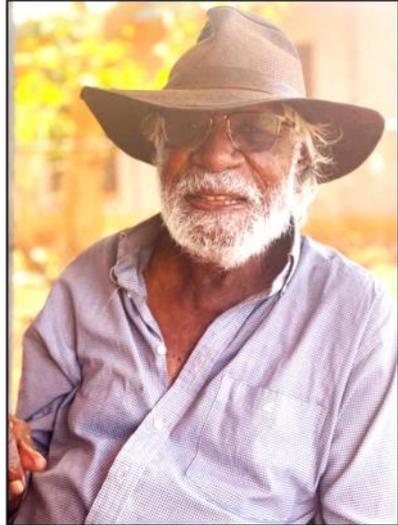
Later that day the community came together for a celebration dinner on Holy Ground. Lynette reports it was a special night with the young men helping with the cooking and the young women volunteering to serve the meal.

Happy 90th Birthday Jangala!

Loved and respected Church and Community Elder, Jerry Jangala Patrick, was present at the Baptism of the young men offering support and wisdom.

On 1st January Jerry celebrated his 90th Birthday. The Baptist Family in the NT give thanks for Jerry, for his quiet and steady witness over the years and his godly presence and support for the Warlpiri community. Jerry is a faithful man of God who has impacted the lives of many on community and all over Australia.

Please pray for Jerry as he continues to teach, mentor and encourage others around him. Pray that Wapirra will keep him well and strong.



The Lajamanu Church Family gathered for the Baptisms followed by Communion.





New Year Singalong at Kalkarindji

The Church at Kalkarindji welcomed in the New Year of 2025 with a number of different events to which the community was all invited.

George Edwards, one of the church leaders, shares about the Church service where Bible stories were read as well as prayer and praise.

A barbecue followed with good food shared and fellowship among all who came along.

Then into the night a Singalong commenced which attracted a good crowd who enjoyed the Christian music and songs. The kids joined in with popular action songs and much laughter.

It was an evening to celebrate the goodness of Father God and look forward with faith and hope to walk in His ways.

Andrea Adams

BELONGING PEOPLE ONLINE

This issue of Belonging People can be found, with previous issues, on the BCSANT website at <https://bcsant.org.au/belonging-people/>

Baptisms & Bible Studies at Ali Curung

The last few months have been very encouraging for our Ali Curung Baptist Church community. They have been intentional in reaching out to their local community through sing-alongs, Bible studies and one on one relationships.

In December, Bavine, the daughter of Jerry and Arana Rice who are giving leadership there, was baptised. Then in January, Cecily Martin and two other women were baptised.

We look forward to spending time with all of them when we return.

***Danny and Beth Hunt
of the Outback Team***



Church Leaders, Jerry and Arana Rice speaking at Alice Springs Baptist Church last August.



Two of the ladies after their baptism in January surrounded by excited family.

Prayer and Worship on Australia Day at Darwin Baptist Church



As Australia Day this year fell on a Sunday, Darwin Baptist Church held a combined prayer and worship service, instead of their regular Sunday services.

Gathering mid-afternoon, people enjoyed singing praises to God together, before having the opportunity to head to eight different prayer stations, to pray for many things within our City, the Northern Territory and our Nation.

Each station had a different focus area:

**Looking back in Remembrance
Natural Disasters**

**The Cross: Repentance/Confession/
Forgiveness**

**Praying for Governments: the
economy and the upcoming election**

Prayer for Indigenous Australians

Mission: Here, There & Beyond

Health of our Communities

Outreach & Community Connections

There was also a range of appropriate child-friendly activities at each prayer station.



Australia Day has become a divisive topic in recent years, causing division among many. Some joyfully celebrate it, while others have concerns for various reasons.

Rather than taking a side, we chose a different approach. We came together not only to celebrate, but to pray. While we appreciate this place we call home, it's important to remember that it's temporary. Our true home is in Heaven, and we are stewards here for a time.

Hebrews 13:14 (NLT) – *For this world is not our permanent home; we are looking forward to a home yet to come.*

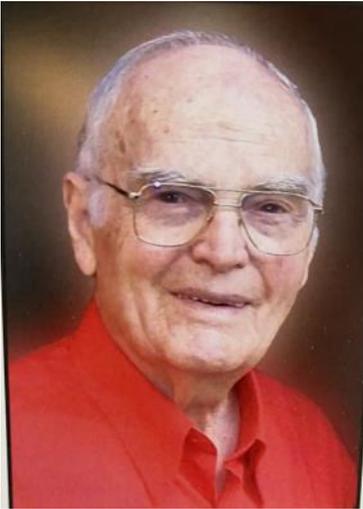
Philippians 3:20 (NIV) – *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

As we prayed, we remembered that this place—Darwin, the NT, Australia—is only temporary. God desires that all people here come to know Him and spend eternity with Him in Heaven. So, we prayed fervently for our nation, our city, and our community, that God may use us all to impact others and draw them nearer.



Ox Roberts
Senior Pastor
Darwin Baptist

Remembering Rev. Robert Brown



The Rev. Robert Brown went to be with his Lord and Saviour in July 2024 having reached the grand age of 100 years four months earlier.

Robert first came to the Territory with his wife Edith to pastor the Darwin Baptist Church 50 years ago, just a few months after Cyclone Tracy had devastated Darwin and turned the lives of its residents upside down.

It is testimony to their commitment, that this middle-aged couple from Melbourne, followed through with the call to DBC made in November the previous year, even though they knew they were coming to a city in upheaval. Reflecting back on that intense period, Robert once said, "The weather was

scorching and the days were 15 hours long. The cyclone had a dramatic impact on the community."

Robert and Edith remained at DBC for the next four years and were actively involved in helping the church folk and others recover after Cyclone Tracy. They were much loved and were a great encouragement and solace to the church family as lives and homes were rebuilt. Robert also served as the President of the Baptist Union of the NT in 1977.

In 1979 Robert concluded his pastorate at Darwin Baptist and Edith and he moved to Shepparton Baptist Church in Victoria. There followed other pastoral and counselling roles in Victoria where Robert 'emanated Christlikeness and reverence for each life.'

Edith was a loving wife and companion to Robert, and they shared 73 years together. Theirs was a close-knit loving family with their four children Peter, (dec), Ann, David and Liz.

Ann reflects, "We were blessed indeed, to have had such amazing, loving, faith-filled parents. We had lots of laughs and fun too and music filled our home from morning to night!"

The Brown family, all six of them, sang together for many years in churches and the four Brown offspring sang and played guitars at Youth services.

In later years, Robert penned a poem which is reproduced in part here and was read at his funeral:

Signing Off

*My gracious Lord, the time has come
When those who love me bid farewell
And all the years that took so long to pass
Are summed up in a paragraph or two.*

*There was no need to fear this day of death,
Adventure new it was – not done before,
It had to be, for it's the plan you've made
For everyone to reach their journey's end.*

*You had assured me that, beyond the end,
Life is continued in the realm of light.
Saved by your grace, I am transformed at last,
Admitted to your presence as your friend.*

*I owe a debt of boundless gratitude
To you, my Saviour, for a life made new,
For your forgiveness when I've sinned again,
And for the purpose that you offered me.*

*So when tomorrow dawns and everyone
Becomes involved again with their concerns,
The world will spin without me just as well,
With only one small mark where I have
been.*

*We've said these things before, Lord. You
and I,
In private talks together day and night.
Perhaps someone who hears them openly
Will, through my passing, enter into life.*

Robert Brown 1924—2024

Robert Brown was indeed an amazing person, a writer, counsellor, communicator and pastor and a loving husband, father and grandfather. We thank God for Robert's life and witness among us.

Andrea Adams



The Brown Family

Jahmayne's Testimony

G'day, my name is Jahmayne. I am a beekeeper in the Northern Territory. My wife, Jess, and I now call Katherine home and have been worshipping at Katherine Baptist Church officially since late 2024.

My wife was born in Katherine and grew up on a cattle station outside of Mataranka but that is her story to tell. Here is a snippet of how I came to faith and how I've grown in the Lord since.

Born in South East Queensland in a non-Christian household, church wasn't a big part of my family's life. However, mum involved us in the local Baptist church's ministries. We played in the local Church Soccer League as well as attended Boys Brigade and Sunday School. But as soon as I entered high school I didn't want any of that anymore. Fortunately, my high school had a heavy chaplaincy network presence and I attended a camp in 2008 run by this ministry and during an evening talk my heart was opened to the Gospel. This Good News I had heard so many times before, but this time I finally understood it.

I gave my heart to the Lord that evening and got plugged into another local church where I started attending youth group and was disciplined by the Youth Pastor (whom I'm good friends with still today).

Although not academically inclined, during high school I received a scholarship for university. After finishing school, I had to take a gap year to do some further study to boost my marks to allow me to get into Social Work, an area I'm passionate about. It was during this gap year, that I got heavily connected into my local church and home group and grew enormously in my faith.

The following year I started uni and had the opportunity to live on campus. During my first week living on campus I could see that if I didn't get plugged into a Christian group and church I would undo all my spiritual growth of the previous 12 months. My youth pastor connected me with a guy he knew of through his mentor. It was through this connection that I got plugged into a Christian ministry.

Jahmayne and Jess



For the following 4 years I would meet with the same small group of guys each week during the semester calendar. I was exposed to life on life discipleship and it solidified my faith, in being who I am. In my third year of uni, I met my now wife Jess, through this ministry group. We got married at the end of 2017 and moved to Darwin in February 2018. As Jess continued studying in Darwin, I began working as a Youth Worker within the Youth Justice sector. In 2020, a mate and I started a beekeeping business and in 2023 I went full-time as the business grew very quickly in a very short period of time.

I'm now the sole owner of the business and am hoping to continue talks with the local schools and youth organisations around starting a program with the youth of Katherine.

Although I'm no longer in the field of Social Work, I am still passionate about helping people change their lives. Now I just have a different mechanism to do so. We believe Katherine will be our long term home and we're excited to be a part of the community and see how God works!

Jahmayne Coolwell

Missions Interlink NT

Transition Training for Remote Indigenous Ministries



Some of the Missions Interlink T-TRIM recent participants at their graduation

We have just completed Missions Interlink's **T-TRIM (Transition Training for Remote Indigenous Ministries)** course in January. We had full numbers with 28 registrations from Darwin, Katherine, Alice Springs and interstate.

Here is what one participant said about the course:

'T-TRIM is fantastic preparation for ministry with Aboriginal people. The presenters are experienced and engaging. The topics are very relevant.'

The second half of T-TRIM will be run in the first week of October 2025 offering Professional Development, with 2 day units including:
**Living in Two Worlds ,
Christian Spirituality in Aboriginal Australian Context and
Aboriginal Languages**

We are also looking forward to visiting Alice Springs to run a taster day on 6th September 2025.

At Katherine Christian Convention on 2-4 May Missions Interlink will host a 'Prayer and Fellowship' gathering on Sunday afternoon.

See back cover for details of KCC.

For those in Darwin and interested or involved in Indigenous Australia ministry, you are welcome to nearly monthly **Missions Interlink Darwin Indigenous Network** gatherings.

more details on nt@missionsinterlink.org.au

Blessings,

***Rachel Borneman
MI NT Ministry Leader***

A Journey from Veranda to Church Building

Cornerstone Christian Fellowship celebrates their 20th Anniversary **this year** and a celebration Dinner is planned for 19th July. More details will be advised in the coming months. Pastor Neil Wright shares, “We thank God for our journey so far, from the veranda of a house, to renting halls at Howard Park, Howard Springs Primary, Good Shepherd School and then finally building at our current location at 85 Whitewood Road.”



*Cornerstone Fellowship
in earlier days meeting
at Howard Springs
School*

The Outback Team

Baptist
Mission
Australia



**Please Pray for The
Outback Team,
Mal and Chris
Good,
Mat (Team Leader)
and Shannon
Anderson,
Danny and Beth
Hunt, living and
walking alongside
our NT indigenous
brothers and
sisters.**



Gwen Celebrates 100 years!



The Baptist Family in the NT send their hearty congratulations to **Gwen Dickman** on reaching her **Centenary**. Now living in Canberra, Gwen remains active and involved in her retirement home. A special celebration is planned for 1st March, Gwen's 100th birthday, with family and friends.

Many friends in the NT and other places, will remember Gwen and we pray together that the Lord will bless her with joy and contentment on the marvellous occasion of her centenary.





Gwen and Gordon Moore

Gwen and Gordon Moore served the Lord at Kalkarindji and Daguragu between 1975 and 1984. They returned again to Kalkarindji for a further two and a half years in 1990 to 1992 to fill a gap when there were no Baptist Missionary staff there. During that time they travelled often to other communities around the Territory to share in Christian events. Their letters from that time speak of the joy they experienced in living, working and worshipping alongside their Gurindji friends. Following their retirement and Gordon's death, Gwen remarried and has since been widowed again.



Welcome Baptist Bush Church!

The BCSANT Annual Assembly 2024 was held in November at Darwin and Rostrevor Baptist Churches. Director of Ministries, Dr Melinda Cousins who was reappointed for another four years, writes,

“Assembly was a wonderful day of celebration as we formally welcomed three member churches, the Zo Baptist Church in Salisbury SA, Broadview Baptist Church in SA - **and the Bush Church in Humpty Doo - who have re-joined BCSANT after previously being a member of BUNT.**

It has been a delight to visit Pastor Sharon Crook and the church at Humpty Doo a couple of times last year and see how they serve and connect with the local community and many people on the fringes with the love of Jesus.

I look forward to the many opportunities to connect with and serve our churches across the Territory in the coming years.

Please get in touch any time if there are ways I and the BCSANT team can support and champion you and your church!

I am looking forward to being in the NT for our May Assembly this year, which will be combined with the Baptist Family Gathering. We continue to learn and grow in how best to hold one meeting in two locations, as we walk together united as churches across NT and SA.”

Editor: The NT Baptist Family add their Welcome to the Baptist Bush Church and look forward to walking together with them in the name of Jesus.



John's Gospel to the Church At Katherine

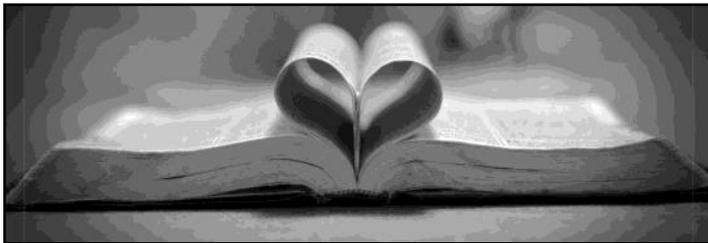
Katherine Baptist Church is working its way through the Gospel of John this year and we are reminded that Jesus is in the beginning, here with us now and in the end of the age, all at the same time. This gives me confidence that all things are in God's hands regardless of this year looking bright and exciting, or pretty much the same or if trouble is facing us.

Believing in Jesus requires us to trust Him to guide and lead us through the maze of life. This trust demands that we find strength in Him and not to rely on the situations around us.

Proverbs 3:5-7 tells us to trust in the Lord with all our heart, and not to rely on our own understanding and in all our ways acknowledge Him, then He will make our paths straight. Finally, we are instructed not to be wise in our own eyes, but to fear the Lord and turn away from evil.

As a Pastor, I am excited to see what God is doing in the lives of His people here in Katherine, how He is directing them. What a privilege it is to serve Him together.

Kevin Young
Pastor
Katherine Baptist Church





Baptist Financial Services

Investing with Purpose: Making a Difference with Baptist Financial Services

When we think about investments to grow God's Kingdom, our minds often turn to new church buildings, expanded ministry teams, or church planting. Yet, sometimes, the most meaningful impact lies in the smaller, deeply personal moments that bring people closer together and closer to God.

For Pastor Mike Mills, an investor with BFS and former Director of Ministries in the Territory, one such moment stands out vividly.

A few years ago, while attending the Baptist Family Gathering, Mike first witnessed the significant difference that BFS's support made to First Nations members of remote communities. Through BFS funding, three Indigenous church leaders from Lajamanu and Yuendumu were able to travel to the Gathering.

For these leaders, the opportunity to gather with the wider church family was transformative.

"In these communities, relationships matter above anything else," Mike explains. "Having them at the conference gave us an opportunity to hear from them, in the informal moments more than the structured business."

This experience wasn't just vital for the visiting leaders but for the wider church as well. "To have these wonderful people with us was so important. Important for them, and important for us," Mike reflects. "It keeps us mindful of their communities, where life is so different from our cities."

By choosing to invest with BFS, individuals like Mike are part of a movement that prioritises connection and community. These purposeful investments empower ministries, bridge geographic and cultural divides, and reflect Christ's heart for unity. Together, we can grow God's Kingdom, one meaningful connection at a time.

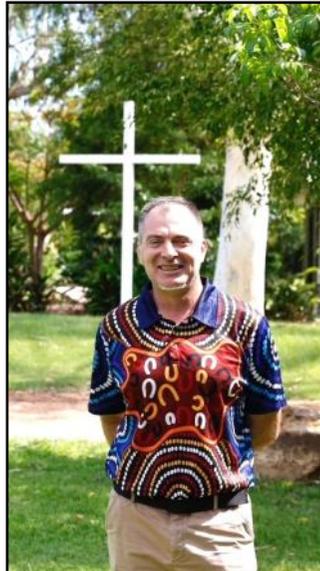
***Glen Thornley – SA & NT Relationship
Manager – 0412 055 832***

Comings and Goings at Nungalinya College



In October George, Lorna, Judith and Angela from Kalkarindji came to study the Bible more and learn about sharing God's way. During their stay in Darwin they shared in fellowship at Casuarina Baptist. It has been wonderful to see an increasing number of believers from the remote NT Baptist churches coming to study at Nungalinya.

In November, Nungalinya College students, staff and friends farewelled Principal Ben van Gelderen at a moving evening ceremony with many speakers, singing and supper. Nungalinya staff and students are excited to welcome their new Principal, Dr Yane Damanik who has previously lived and worked in ministry in the Territory. Pray for her and the College as they continue to empower Indigenous Christians.



Past Principal Ben

Following 'Jesus Christ's Call and Example'

Casuarina Settlement Support Group



Excitement is mounting within the Casuarina Church's Settlement Support Group as they prepare to welcome a refugee family to Darwin at the end of March.

The family of 2 parents and two young children is presently living in Egypt, the parents having moved there many years ago from a small village in Syria.

As soon as the family's travel arrangements are made, which are expected to be made soon, the Casuarina Settlement Support Group must find suitable accommodation for them, providing

furniture and the necessities to help them ease into their new life in Australia.

This is not the first time that a group from Casuarina Baptist Church has been involved in helping refugee families to settle in Darwin. Around ten years ago, an earlier Support group, comprised of Church folk, helped to settle a number of families from Africa including the Congo, Ethiopia and Burundi. It was a challenging and busy time, yet most rewarding.

The Casuarina Settlement Support Group started in May 2024 and is now registered as a Community Support Group with the Australian Government's *Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot* program. The Group has held a number of events to raise awareness and raise funds.

At present there are six members who each regularly attend CBC Sunday Services but membership is not limited to membership of CBC. A further 30 plus people are on the supporters' list. The first of the Group's values, as set out in its constitution is **'Jesus Christ's call and example'**.

Leading the group are Brett Midena and Judy Roberts from whom have come a number of great ideas for fundraising and building awareness within the church community.

Fundraising activities so far have included a Dinner, a Games night and several Sausage Sizzles held after the Sunday morning service. A Breakfast was held on the 1st of March.

The Group would be very pleased to hear from anyone in Darwin who is interested in joining the Group or being added to the supporters' list.

Contact Brett Midena on brettmidena@gmail.com

*Opposite: Group members collecting household items
Below: Fundraising Dinner at Casuarina Church*



Katherine Christian Convention 2025

May 2-4 at Katherine Showgrounds

Theme: Forgiveness

**Speakers: Rachael Kendino
& Wendy Willika**



Day Sessions: **Saturday 1.30pm + Sunday 9.30am**
Celebration Evenings: **Friday 7pm, Saturday + Sunday 6.30pm**
Canteen open: **Friday PM, Saturday, Sunday + Monday AM**

- ◆ ***Children & Youth Programs***
- ◆ ***Celebration Evenings***
- ◆ ***Bibles & Resources for Sale***
- ◆ ***Creative Arts Workshops***
- ◆ ***Pre-loved clothes***



More information available on KCC's website www.kathcc.org.au

Email: christianconventionkatherine@gmail.com

Belonging People

Newsletter of the Baptist Churches of the NT

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