

CHRISTMAS UPGRADED

Last Saturday night we had one of those rare moments where you are blessed for no apparent reason. We had bought U2 tickets for our family a few months earlier. We had gone on the internet to purchase them and we were in the last few rows of the second tier stand at Subiaco oval. We were just happy to be there and the four of us were excited about the concert about to start.



With 30 minutes to go, an usher came up to our section and asked if we wanted to move to Premium seats only metres away from the stage. An entire company had booked it but had not taken the seats. They were worth over \$400 each! We didn't have to think about it long. Upgraded at a U2 concert was an amazing experience. We sat in padded seats, plenty of legroom and could see the faces of the band. We were happy!



Karen is the WA President for Baptist women. She is currently working for Willow Creek, USA as an Executive Director for GLS Asia. She has a husband and two children [21 and 18] and has a strong desire to see people live and minister out of a place of health and passion.

This Christmas, Christ promises that He not only came to Earth to bring us eternal salvation, but to give us an 'upgrade' while we are here. He knew that this world would be full of troubles and trials and so He came to give us life abundant! [John 10:10] We have access to greater measures of peace, love, joy and grace; we have a comforter and a guide who is with us always [Matt 28:20]; we have wisdom for any circumstances we may face [James 1:5]; we have strength on supply to endure any hardship; we have a way of escape for any temptations [1 Cor 10:13]; we have someone who will supply all our needs [Phil 4:19]...and the list goes on.

By accepting Christ and all He has to offer this Christmas, we have an earthly upgrade that is far beyond anything we could imagine. Why not take a moment to thank God for His provision and for loving us so much that He not only gave us a way to be with Him eternally, but He gave us a life full of blessing and promise. Have a wonderful Christmas.

With love in Him

Karen Wilson
Baptist Women's President WA





Prayer for Today

Dear God:
I pray for every woman
receiving this e-news:

Help her live her life
to the fullest.
Please promote her
and cause her to excel
above her expectations.

Help her to shine
in the darkest places
where it is impossible
to love.

Protect her at all times,
lift her up when she needs
you the most, and
let her know when
she walks with you,
She will always
be safe.
Amen.



GUEST WRITER

Carolyn Craggs

Bells Ring Out...

There is a lot that makes Christmas a special time of year - the opportunity to celebrate the gift of Christ, family and community togetherness, the unashamed egocentric joy of the children and the guilty pleasure of special food.

There is a lot about the “holiday season” that is not so “holy” though - I used to feel like the decorations, carols and advertisements detracted from Christ and left me on a solo journey of searching for meaning amidst the tinsel. Something changed my mind last year about this and other external trappings of spiritual celebrations.

The house we used to live in had devout Hindu neighbours on both sides. Each morning the women of the house used to ring little bells as part of their “pooja” or worship to their gods. It used to annoy, frustrate and disgust me that evil counterfeits could get such regular devotion until I realised that I could use the bell-ringing as a cue for my OWN worship.

So, each time the neighbours rang their bells, I remembered to pray for them and for their eyes to be opened. I still pray for them (though I must admit not regularly now I don’t have the bells to remind me!), but as I listen to the Temple music blaring from across the road, I have a challenge for all of us...

This Christmas, can we use the “distractions” as cues to focus on the true and living Emmanuel? Can we allow them remind us to spread the good news of great joy to those who are currently caught up in hanging the fairy lights rather than walking in the Light? Bless you all and thankyou for being part of my community this Christmas.



Carolyn Craggs is currently living in Mysore, South India with her husband Colin and 4 children (8, 6, 3, 1) where they have been learning Kannada language and doing leadership development for the past 16 months. From an Anglo-Indian Anglican background, her home church is Inglewood Community Church.