

Lightning Links

with Kurt & Bec Langmead • May 2025



Regular readers may be familiar with Welcome Week from previous years. What was new for 2025 was the rain, which started on Monday or Tuesday and didn't let up. The wet weather provided the best possible backdrop for showcasing the love of Christ.

It was my moment of touch football glory.

I (Kurt) stepped around one defender, then sped past two more. Throngs of local teens stood gob-smacked in the pouring rain – 30 high-schoolers who had turned up for our Youth Night at Spider Brown Oval.

Cheers erupted and sporting immortality flashed momentarily before my mind's eye as I slid through the mud under the Spider Brown posts for a try.

But sporting super-stardom is a fickle beast. I felt a snap as I slid past my left pinkie, still plugged in the sodden turf. Ouch! Four hospital visits, two operations, and a follow-up infection later (I'm writing this newsletter from my hospital bed!), the million-dollar question... was it worth it?

I guess the answer depends on what the surgeon says. What I do know is that it was a VERY memorable try!

Welcome Week is our annual mission in partnership with NorthLight Anglican (Sydney) – 22 top years and counting since the partnership first kicked off in 2003.

Built around the flagship after-school kids and youth clubs, the week also includes team visits to schools, preschools, playgroup and aged care, along with outreach events for ladies, men and youth,

all building to a special invitational church service on the final Sunday.

While the rain certainly made some aspects of our program challenging (getting kids safe and dry from school to the youth centre in a 'walking bus' each afternoon, for example), it also gave our team a chance to really shine. While the rest of the town was running for shelter, we were out there each day in the rain – setting up and packing up, shooting hoops and sharing Bible stories. I heard the comments and saw the looks from locals, who were clearly impressed.

Give thanks for a great, long-running BCA partnership like this one with NorthLight Anglican.

Pray for good follow-up and gospel fruit from this year's Welcome Week mission.

Easter in the Ridge

Not long after the mission team rolled out, the carnival rolled in. Each year, at Easter time, the population of Lightning Ridge (famously recorded as a question mark on the sign into town) swells from a baseline of 2000 to 10-12,000 almost overnight!

Easter festival in the Ridge is a wild ride. Dodgems, rodeos, races and street festivals. As usual, the carnival is set up in the vacant blocks next to our church and vicarage. Needless to say, the nighttime routine does get a bit



Banner Image: Kamilaroi Country

Circle Image: The Langmead family

Middle Image: The aftermath of Kurt's touch footy injury

Lower Image: LRCC Easter Sunday street stall



The Welcome Week team

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interrupted when the cha-cha ride is revolving at breakneck speed within a few metres of the kids' bedroom windows!

Amidst all the lights and sounds, it's always our ambition to keep Jesus in the picture at Easter, God willing front and centre where he belongs.

So, we held services at Lightning Ridge and Cumborah on Good Friday, set up a street stall on the on the Saturday, then celebrated the resurrection with a Lord's Supper church service followed by a roast lamb lunch at our place on Easter Sunday.

We should mention the fireworks, as well. The Saturday night firework display is right over our back fence, and put on by a Christian couple (Steve and Tracey) from Parkes. We watched the fireworks with some friends round the backyard firepit, and the following morning got to give three cheers to Steve and Tracey who had joined us at church. Hip Hip, Hooray!



Enjoying soft serve ice cream at the 2025 Easter Festival

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Give thanks for the opportunity to keep Christ front and centre at Easter.

HOPE25

Easter Sunday was special for another reason as well. The beginning of HOPE25 – a season of focused outreach in Anglican parishes like ours right across Australia.

After a brief but much appreciated week away as a family, it was the start of Term 2 when HOPE25 really got going for us, built around three special initiatives:



1. Preaching through Romans chapter 1 to 4 – in sync with another one of our Sydney-based BCA partner churches, Engadine Heathcote Anglican.

2. Holding a Back2Church Sunday on 25 May – this weekend with 50 copies of Luke's Gospel to give away, and 1500 flyers put in post office boxes!

3. Hosting an outreach course called Taste & See (flyer pictured above), where the Gospel is presented over four meals – unfortunately, we had to temporarily postpone this course while Kurt is away getting treatment on my injured finger.

Pray for the preaching and teaching from Romans, that the gospel would indeed be powerful for salvation.

Pray that lots of people will come back to church on Sunday, or perhaps for the first time!

Pray for the opportunity to reschedule Taste & See, and that participants really would taste and see that the Lord is good.

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Helpers for harvest

Our final highlight for the last few months has not been a mission event or program, but people – real life people who have come alongside us to help out.

The first is Callum Dowling, part-time BCA Bursary Student and ministry trainee on loan from St Mark's UNEchurch Armidale. Callum, wife Monique and baby Emmanuel have been a big blessing. We have appreciated their friendship, enthusiasm and willingness to step in and step up when help is needed. It has been fun watching Manny getting loved by our kids and wider church family too!

Then there is Ash, our Christian

sister who's joined us from Maitland. Ash has come to teach in our local high school and serve in our church. Ash has a real heart for welcoming and evangelism, and is doing a great job getting to know the teens in our town, and our own kids as well.

And when it comes to the younger kids, we still have Heather, our part-time Children's Ministry Leader, who unfortunately has had hand troubles of her own. Her thoughtfulness and intentionality with programming, and her dedication to the kids is second to none.

What a privilege to have quality gospel partners close at hand.

I've been reminded lately how short-lived sporting glory (and physical

health) can be. Even something as small as a broken pinkie can cause a fair bit of trouble! Thank God that our hope is in something so much more substantial – Christ crucified, risen, and coming again!

And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." (Rev. 21:5 ESV)

With lots going on at a church level, we continue to value your prayers for us as a family as well.

Give thanks for this latest season of life and ministry in Lightning Ridge

Thank God for helping our school kids to make it safely and cheerfully (mostly) through Term 1, including June now in Year 7, and Jem in Kindergarten.

Thank God for the care and support of our church family (both lay members and ministry team) while Kurt has been back and forth from hospital with his injured finger.

Pray for our marriage to be close and strong, and our parenting to be wise and loving, during this season of to-ing and fro-ing amidst ongoing ministry responsibilities.

Pray for healing and return to somewhat normal functioning of Kurt's finger.

Pray for opportunities for us and all the saints in the Ridge to keep on sharing both our lives and the Gospel with people in places that others might miss!



Kurt & Bec with the Dowlings (centre) and Ash (left)

In Him,

Kurt, Bec, June, Arthur, Lydia, Jeremiah & Timothy

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Lightning Ridge**

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