

Outback Owens

with Simon & Angela Owen • June 2025



We've had an encouraging few months in Cloncurry and beyond. Each month the women's Bible study continues to draw a small group of women from Cloncurry and beyond (up to two hours away), and it continues to be a great source of encouragement for all involved.

Led by Angela, the group has been going deeper into God's Word as they finished off a series which looked at Jesus through the eyes of women in the gospels, and kicked off a new study series this term on the book of Colossians.

friends, family members and colleagues joining us for the first time. Angela has also had many fruitful opportunities to connect with mums at Mainly Music (Fridays) and at the library (Thursdays) throughout the term.

We are also thankful for all the wonderful ministry opportunities that God has given us this past term in Cloncurry, Julia Creek, Cairns, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and Toowoomba. With BCA, we certainly have opportunities to *go the distance*!

Simon has also been continuing to lead a Tuesday night prayer gathering with a group of men and women from the church, which has grown in size this year. It has been an encouraging gathering, featuring some sharing from the Bible, occasional singing, and intercessory prayer for the local church & community, our nation, and the world.

During Term 1 at St Andrew's Church in Cloncurry, we worked through a sermon series on the book of James for kids and adults. It was beneficial to explore the theological truths in James and consider their practical application in daily Christian living. Now, in Term 2, Simon has been preaching a series called *Promoting the Gospel* and has encouraged our congregation to promote the Gospel through prayer, praise, and the Word.

Simon has also continued ministry at Cloncurry State School, including Religious Instruction classes for grades 1-6, helping with pancake breakfast on Fridays and attending P&C meetings.

Earlier in Term 1, we had the opportunity to host a church stall at Cloncurry's *Curry Day*. This helped increase our visibility in the community and enabled us, along with other members of our congregation, to have conversations with many long-term and newer residents in the area.

The women in Cloncurry and Julia Creek also had an opportunity to be encouraged at a women's event in March with speakers from the travelling Christian Women Communicating International (CWCI) safari team, who shared a message about God's everlasting love. This was our biggest CWCI Safari women's event in the three years we have been in Cloncurry, with a mix of ages, and many

Simon also had the opportunity to preach a message on Psalm 139 at the World Prayer Day Service, hosted this year at the Catholic Church. This is an annual event that we take turns hosting.

Banner Image: Julia Creek

Circle Image: The Owen family

Middle Image: Angela with some of the ladies from the Bible study

Bottom Image: The kids and their creations for the Easter Hat parade



Julia Creek church filled with adults and kids

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With thanks to God, we have continued monthly services and ministry at Julia Creek, and we're greatly encouraged by the way God is drawing people to the congregation.

We have had several new people join the congregation in recent months; some are residents from Julia Creek and surrounding areas, and others are Christians who are doing short-term work on stations in the Julia Creek area. So, it has been a great encouragement to see this small outback church filled with adults and kids praising God!

We have also been meeting with a new congregation member on Friday nights when she is in town with her kids. She has recently been drawn to the church and put her trust in Jesus. So we are spending time reading the Bible and discipling her in her faith.

It has been a great encouragement to see this small outback church filled with adults and kids praising God!

Simon has also had opportunities this past term to visit the Julia Creek State School and teach a RI class, which is always encouraging for the kids participating.

Thank God for all the new people who have connected with our congregations in Cloncurry and Julia Creek and pray they will continue to grow and be established in their faith and in the church community. Please particularly pray for the lady and

her children, whom we meet with each week; that God would continue to grow their faith, love, and knowledge of Jesus.

At the end of March Simon attended the four-day North Queensland Anglican Diocesan clergy retreat in Cairns. It was enjoyable and encouraging for Simon to connect with other clergy and, particularly, to connect with some close ministry friends in person rather than over Zoom. There was an opportunity to have some good theological discussions throughout the conference, Simon was asked to share some updates from ministry in Cloncurry/Julia Creek, and it was encouraging to hear presentations from all the ministry unit leaders.

During the school holidays, we had the opportunity to fly to Brisbane and speak at four BCA Connect events in Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and Toowoomba. It was an excellent opportunity to share everything that God has been doing, and was a great encouragement to meet so many prayerful and faith-filled supporters. This time also marked our third anniversary in Cloncurry, so it was fitting to share the journey that God has taken us on over the past three years and pause to praise and pray to our great God.

Our time after this also included a lovely and refreshing holiday on the Gold Coast, which included a day at SeaWorld, time at the beach, swimming at the accommodation's pool, visiting



The Owens with Mike & Sandra Uptin & Sarah McKinnon at BCA Connect Gold Coast

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cafes and parks, and catching up with some family members.

We returned at the beginning of Easter week, so Simon was busy preparing for our four Easter Services (Good Friday at Cloncurry & Julia Creek), Easter Sunday Dawn Service, and 9 am in Cloncurry. All services were well attended, and some new people have continued coming to church. The Dawn Service is always a highlight of the year. It was a moving time of praise, reflection and hearing from God's Word – celebrating that Jesus has risen through the eyes of the first eyewitnesses.

Another great opportunity after Easter is the invitation to speak and pray at the ANZAC Day services at Cloncurry State School, and at the community Dawn Service and 9:20 am service. It's a wonderful opportunity to share the Gospel and stories about soldiers who trusted God, as well as lead our community in prayer. Simon received lots of positive feedback from community members, and there were great opportunities to connect with people at the ANZAC Day gunfire breakfast and later at morning tea. Like most events, we are often the last to leave because we end up in conversations with people!

After the ANZAC Day weekend, we had Mike Uptin (our BCA Regional Officer) visit us to assist with the church over this weekend. We

had Mike strategically booked in to help us after the BCA Connect events, the Easter and ANZAC Day weekend, to give Simon some respite. We enjoyed some quality time with Mike at Cloncurry River, which still had a small amount of water flowing through it, some dinners together, and Mike led the kids' spot and preached for us on Sunday. We are thankful for Mike and BCA's support in this ministry.

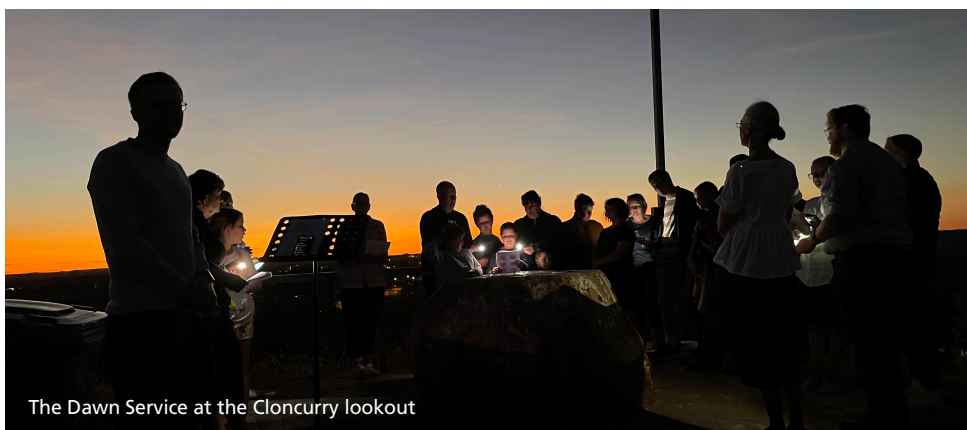
Simon's parents joined us for a week in early May, so it was a blessing for us all to catch up, spend more time at the river and dam, stargazing and having a BBQ at the park. A highlight was spending a morning with Simon's parents at a beautiful property (an outback oasis!) that belongs to a lady from our congregation who lives about 15km out of town.

We've now entered the 'busy' season of the year and we've got

quite a bit coming up including a *Christianity Explored* afternoon, BCA Nomads visiting to assist with property repairs and ministry, various community events, the Equip Women's conference, Synod, friends visiting, and some holiday Kids' Clubs. So please join us in giving thanks for all God has done these past three months and please continue to keep us and God's ministry in Cloncurry and Julia Creek in your prayers. We greatly appreciate your support and partnership.



Simon speaking at the ANZAC Day service



The Dawn Service at the Cloncurry lookout

Blessings and thanks

Simon, Angela, Grace, Esther & Josiah

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