

Christmas Appeal resources for your church

Thank you for participating in Baptist World Aid Australia's Christmas Appeal.

By the end of November you will have received a resource pack in the post. Your pack should include:

- Christmas DVD
- Donation envelopes
- A3 poster
- Treasurer's form

CHRISTMAS DVD

This has four clips for you to play each Sunday in December, including Christmas Day. Consider showing one clip each week from the start of December. In addition to showing the clip you may like to ask someone from the congregation to share for 1 to 2 minutes each week on how they would answer the question, 'what does Jesus want for His birthday?'

DONATION ENVELOPES

These allow your church family to make a tax deductible donation to the Christmas Appeal. You have been provided with a double quantity of donation envelopes so that you can make the envelopes available to your church twice:

- Distribute half the envelopes with your church newsletter on the second Sunday in December, when you play the second DVD clip, 'I was sick and you took care of me'.
- Distribute the remaining envelopes on your Christmas Day service when you play the DVD clip, 'I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink'.
- Please also have additional envelopes available in a prominent position in your church throughout December.

A3 POSTER

Place the poster in a prominent position in your church to promote the Christmas Appeal.

TREASURER'S FORM

This helps us process your church's donation. Please fill out this form after the collection is made and return to Baptist World Aid Australia no later than the 28th February 2011. The treasurer's form is also available on our website www.baptistworldaid.org.au

POWER POINT SLIDES

Use these to promote the Christmas Appeal in your church service. The PowerPoint slides are available on our website www.baptistworldaid.org.au



BULLETIN INSERTS

These consider the question, 'what does Jesus want for His birthday?' and can be included in your church newsletter each week throughout December. They will be sent to you via email or are available at www.baptistworldaid.org.au for you to print. You may also wish to just copy the Christmas reflections and include them in your regular newsletter.

OUTDOOR BANNER

If you have requested a banner, it will be mailed to your church separately. Hang the banner outside your church to invite your local community to join in your Christmas Day service.

What does Jesus want for His birthday? A Christmas Service

The theme for Baptist World Aid Australia's 2011 Christmas Appeal is "What does Jesus want for His birthday?" This is a positive theme for churches to build their Christmas services around. Some suggestions of how this can be done are included below.

BUILD FOCUS BEFORE CHRISTMAS DAY

"What does Jesus want for His birthday?" Is a question designed to provoke reflection and discussion. Consider putting the question to your congregation and your community in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Baptist World Aid Australia has a step-by-step guide to help you do this:

Sunday 1 – 4th December

- If you ordered a banner, hang the banner outside the church to advertise your Christmas services to your community.
- Place the poster inside the church to stimulate thinking and discussion.
- Play the first clip on the DVD: *What does Jesus want for His birthday?*
- Include a Christmas reflection in your church newsletter from our online resources.

Sunday 2 – 11th December

- Distribute half the donation envelopes to your church family with your church newsletter. This will allow those who will not be at church on Christmas Day the opportunity to give.
- Play the second clip on the DVD: *'I was sick and you took care of me'*
- Include a Christmas reflection or bulletin insert in your newsletter from our online resources.

Sunday 3 – 18th December

- Ensure there is a pile of donation envelopes available in your church.
- Play the third clip on the DVD: *'I was hungry and you gave me something to eat'*
- Include a Christmas reflection or bulletin insert in your newsletter from our online resources.



Christmas Day

- Distribute the remaining donation envelopes to your church family with your church newsletter.
- Play the fourth and main clip in the DVD: *'I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink'*
- Include a Christmas reflection in your church newsletter from our online resources.

What does Jesus want for His birthday?

Sermon

Big idea for the sermon

Jesus came in order to set the world right. For his birthday He wants us to be set right with God, to start being set right within ourselves, and to join with Him in setting right our fractured human community.

Introduction

Introduce the sermon by sharing a story about the best/worst/funniest gift you have ever received. Point out that while we often focus on the gifts we receive at Christmas time, given it is a celebration of Jesus' birthday it is appropriate to pause and ask what would Jesus want for his birthday? Ask people how they would answer the question. Consider using the vox pop DVD clip from Baptist World Aid Australia which shows people answering that very question.

1. Jesus wants us to be right with God

We are designed to be in loving relationship with our Creator. This is the first thing Jesus wants for His birthday, for each of us to know that we are loved by God, that we can turn to God for guidance on how to live life, and we can trust in God to walk through life's challenges beside us.

2. Jesus wants us to be right within ourselves

We are designed to live good, purposeful, value filled lives. Jesus has promised us the gift of the Holy Spirit to help us start becoming the God shaped people we are meant to be. This is the second thing Jesus wants for His birthday.

3. Jesus wants us to join his mission of setting the world right

We are designed to join God in his mission. God wants to use you and me to bring hope and healing to a broken and fractured world. This is the third thing Jesus wants for His birthday. There are many ways we can do this. Contributing to the Christmas Day offering is one – the funds raised will go to Baptist World Aid Australia to help communities living in poverty around the world.

Call to action

Conclude the sermon by inviting people to give Jesus what He wants for His birthday. Offer them simple and practical guidelines as to how they might do this, encouraging them to pick at least one action to commit to.



What does Jesus want for His birthday?

Kids Talk

Jesus doesn't need birthday presents like PlayStations or dolls. The present He really wants is for us to love Him and each other with all we've got.

Outline

Before the service set up a large gift wrapped box. The box should be large enough to contain a person (you may be able to get a dishwasher or other large appliance box from an electrical retailer) and you should sneak a prearranged volunteer into the box at some stage during the service (make sure the box has good ventilation). Explain that Christmas is a celebration of Jesus birthday so inside the box is a gift for Jesus. Ask the children to volunteer what gift they think it might be. Allow them to take turns to go up and feel the weight of the box, bang on it, do whatever they think to identify what's in the box without actually taking the lid off.

Once you've gathered enough suggestions, explained that Jesus doesn't need a PlayStation or a new doll, but He does really want what's in the box. Ask the children to count down from 10 to 1 and on zero yell "surprise Jesus". At that point your volunteer should burst up through the top of the box. Have the volunteer explain that his/her gift to Jesus is themselves.

Explain to the children that what Jesus really wants for Christmas is for us to know He loves us and to follow Him with all our heart. If you have time allow some of the children to take turns getting into the box and bursting out saying "Surprise Jesus! It's me!" as an expression of their willingness to give themselves to Jesus.

Thank you for involving your church in Baptist World Aid Australia's Christmas Appeal in 2011

**WHAT DOES
JESUS
WANT FOR HIS
BIRTHDAY?**

***"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."* Matthew 25:40**

